THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Crisis of the Church 601
Week by Week 602
Trailing Clouds of Glory 605
The Church in Danger in Mexico..Frank C. Hanighen 607
Was Revolutionary America Dry?.....
George Holladay McKee 609
Edison and Religion .....John F. O'Hagan 612
A Social Syllabus .....Frank A. Smothers 614
I Visit Carmel (*verse*).....Sister M. Madelva 616
A Monument to Charity .....George Barton 616
Lawrence and the French .....Julie Kernan 617
Autumnal Coast (*verse*) .....Frances Frost 618
Communications 618
The Play .....Richard Dana Skinner 621
Books .....James H. Ryan, William Franklin Sands, George N. Shuster, Catherine Radziwill, William M. Agar, Grenville Vernon, J. Elliot Ross, James J. Walsh..... 622

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A CRISIS OF THE CHURCH

AS THIS number of THE COMMONWEAL goes to press, the tenth annual convention of the Catholic Rural Life Conference will be meeting in Dubuque, Iowa, the storm center of the agricultural crisis in this country. An editorial representative of this paper is attending the conference, and in future issues will report the results of it. In the meanwhile, we are again calling our readers' attention to the fundamental importance of this subject. We have received from a priest, a member of the faculty of one of the most important of Catholic colleges, a letter which so trenchantly states the present lamentable and alarming indifference of Catholics to a problem which vitally affects their interests, in a degree perhaps greater than any other problem of the many now pressing upon them, that we give it in full, as follows:

"It would not be surprising if someone should ask the question: 'Has the Catholic Church in the United States no interest in the farmer?'

"The Catholic press, like every other organ, teems with literature on the depression. Over the radio, representative Catholics regularly discuss the all-absorbing topic. From every quarter of the country there are recorded pronouncements, made on occasions more or less important, which advocate some measure of relief to a suffering world. Our activities have been numerous; generous offerings are made to relieve those in need of immediate assistance; undertakings on a large scale have been organized to accomplish the same purpose.

"The occasion has not found us sleeping. Our sympathies have been keen, intelligent, energetic and self-sacrificing. But our attention has been directed almost exclusively to the conditions surrounding city residents. We have tried to help the unemployed, so much so that almost every public utterance in the mouth of Catholic speakers has dealt with their condition. The laborer has not been forgotten, and we have gone on record almost unanimously in support of any measure or even any suggestion calculated to alleviate his circumstances.

"All this is commendable in the highest degree, of course. No one regrets it, certainly. But meanwhile, what have we said or done in the interest of the suffering farmer? What Catholic paper, magazine or review has taken up his cause? Throughout the whole length and breadth of the country, what Catholic publication ever dwells upon his condition? Week after

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week our various organs submit their pages to eager readers with no more reference to the state of agriculture in this alarming crisis than if this particular industry had never existed as a factor in the economic life of our people.

"No one anywhere, presuming to speak with authority on the subject, hesitates to call agriculture the basic industry. No one hesitates to declare that any lasting improvement in present world conditions must commence with a bettering of the farmers' position. It is very doubtful if there is even one man in the public life of the United States who would not subscribe to this view. Singularly enough, however, the support seems to end with a bold expression of conviction. Nothing is really done about it, and, as always happens when there is a decided reluctance to make a certain move or personal interests restrain effort in that direction, the question is dismissed with a lip-wise 'nothing can be done about it.'

"As a result of this everywhere-prevailing attitude, the agricultural interests of the country have been reduced to a condition which would have seemed incredible even three or four years ago. It may not be generally understood that at the present time there is perhaps not one farmer in the country in a position to make ends meet. Farming, as a livelihood, has become an impossibility. There are many intelligent, experienced, energetic men in the farming class, and even these, in spite of every effort, find themselves on the road to an early bankruptcy. The accumulations of a lifetime will soon have disappeared. They and their wives and children have worked longer hours than are required of any other class in the country's population; they have continually deprived themselves of pastimes and pleasures which the laboring man's family claim as a right; they have practised economy in every detail, and the possessions so acquired during years of perseverance are now to be taken from them in spite of themselves.

"Injustice, plain injustice in the working of our present economic system, is the explanation. The farmer is not in a position to protect himself, and as a consequence he is not given his share. All of his products he is obliged to dispose of at figures that have no proportion to the outlay of labor and capital necessary to production. No one thinks of offering him a just remuneration. His part is to labor long hours, to struggle with many difficulties, and hand over to others the fruits of his toil.

"As representatives of the One True Church, are we not called upon to take a stand against widespread, rampant injustice?"

During the last two years THE COMMONWEAL has published a series of special articles, dealing with many aspects of the agricultural crisis, and of Catholic efforts to deal with the crisis. We do not mention this fact merely in order to escape the blame laid at the door of the Catholic press by our correspondent; but rather to emphasize the gravity of his charges by adding our testimony to his concerning the indifference and neglect manifested by the majority of Catholics, clergy as well as laity. For in spite of the fact that we have laid before the country the contributions of the leaders of Catholic Action in rural life problems, no series of articles ever published by us has attracted so little attention, or provoked less discussion. Yet if Catholics do not go back to the land in large numbers, under conditions which will give them at least a fair chance to make a decent living, and to educate their children adequately, and to achieve a reasonable measure of economic security, and cultural and spiritual advantages, the Catholic Church in this country would seem to be doomed to speedy and incurable decay. Something like 80 percent of our Catholic population is at present urban. City life destroys human fertility in some three to four generations. Immigration walls now prevent the influx of fresh Catholic stock. Humanly speaking, nothing is more certain that unless American Catholics return to the soil, and plant deep and permanent roots in it, the present 20 percent of the population claimed by the Church will dwindle far, far below that point, inexorably and rapidly. For those awake to the truth, the convention at Dubuque is an effort to avert the threatened doom of the Catholic Church in the United States. That doom is certain unless American Catholics listen to the handful of devoted and enlightened men and women who lead the pitiably small and wretchedly supported organization of the Catholic Rural Life Conference.

WEEK BY WEEK

QUITE possibly the world has gone mad. This statement does not mean that any large number of individuals have been given tickets of admission to various sanatoria. But mankind as a collective being is quite obviously deranged and myopic. The old, natural incentives to group solidarity have grown weak, and nothing has appeared to take their places. Clans and tribes once merged in a society controlled by belief in Christian law. There followed times of dissolution, in which new concepts of religious union were associated with varied forms of nationalistic fervor. What is left of all that today? Well, first of all there is visible in every society a desire for some concentration and harmony. But since each of two dozen warring groups insists that the desire must be gratified in its own way, the outcome apparently can only be the imposition by force of the strongest point of view. This may then find itself not entirely secure, and attempt to strengthen its authority by effecting compromises with dissident groups. Accordingly in Italy the autocratic state of Mussolini has again and again wooed and made concessions to the Catholic Church. M. Herriot, representing French democratic liberalism, had adopted some of the tenets of the more nationalistic Right. Russia proceeds,

Various Frenzies

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whenever expedient, to allow a larger measure of bourgeois freedom. And in Germany the "President's Cabinet" continues to bargain for favor with such groups as the hostile Bavarians, the Center party and the rightward-moving Nazis.

THIS last named endeavor to reëstablish a national authority is possibly the most interesting of all. Germany is the only European state which during the twelve years following the war lived according to Anglo-Saxon precepts. While its neighbors were re-emphasizing a patriotism based on firm centralization of authority, the Reich became an exceedingly liberal state. There Socialists abandoned their plans of creating a Marxian community, and pledged themselves to uphold a constitutional democracy inside which capitalist operations were controlled solely by a policy of social welfare. There an official Catholic party co-operated with Socialism, in local, commonwealth and federal government. There the multi-party system flourished so enthusiastically that the number of separate groups with representation in the parliament was finally as great as the number of parties in France, England, Scotland and Ireland put together. And after so startling a demonstration of the disunion of modern society had been given, the people tired of it. Hitler preached union by force and grew stronger and stronger. Whereupon the President stole, as we should say, the thunder of the Nazi chieftain. A new Cabinet emerged by decree, supported by a mere fraction of the electorate—and the army. Will it succeed in weaning Germany from liberalism to conservative one-mindedness? The answer to that question will be eagerly if somewhat sceptically awaited. If the Von Papen program were better than it is, the idea of putting it into effect may have come some dozen years too late.

SOME good does happen in the world of politics, despite numerous opinions to the contrary. The nation as a whole can well afford to glance at New York State, fortunate in having rival candidates for the governor's office who merit all the confidence that can be placed in them. Colonel "Wild Bill" Donovan, whose military sobriquet clings to him despite years of quite pacific work at legal tasks, is the Republican nominee whose personality was strong enough to triumph over organization opposition; Colonel Herbert H. Lehman, the Democratic candidate, has already demonstrated that he is an unusually efficient and devoted public servant. Mr. Lehman is from one point of view an "exceedingly rare bird"—a wealthy man whose business acumen was of the soundest, but who abandoned the making of money in order to do as much as he possibly could for civic and social progress. Chosen Lieutenant-Governor of New York in 1928, he supervised the financing operations of the state so efficiently that literally millions of dollars were saved. Then, after the crash of 1929 which threatened to make great banks look like defunct pawn-shops, he put a million dollars of his own into a particularly wobbly one, gathered more support from other wealthy men, and rescued every penny owing to depositors. Finally this remarkably astute and kind-hearted genius cast an eye over the state hospitals for the insane, catalogued their deficiencies, and then persuaded the people to remedy conditions which had been allowed to become indescribably bad. That is a record of which any citizen, any commonwealth, any nation might well be decidedly proud.

Progress in State Leadership

"BEER by March" is the prophecy of the Honorable John N. Garner. Nor is this any longer an isolated prediction. More and more persistently, the business of brewing is adopting a code of optimism. Anti-prohibition workers in various states report an altogether surprising readiness to "sign up" as opponents of the Volstead régime. The arguments which have swung the public seem pretty obvious: a tax on beer would afford revenues payable with cheerfulness and without distress; and the criminality which illegal traffic in liquor has encouraged shocks, frightens and angers the nation. As a movement the dry cause has pretty well dried up. Nevertheless, one may earnestly doubt that Milwaukee and Munich will be doing a rushing business in these parts by the time St. Patrick's Day comes round again. Mr. Garner is probably right in supposing that the next House will be overwhelmingly thirsty. But the rest of the government, so far as one is able to see, will remain a little less than anxious to fight out a beer law under Mr. Hoover's tutelage. There is just the chance that the fierce struggle to unearth new sources of taxation may force Congress to do somewhat prematurely what the majority of the people clearly want. The chief obstacle is the absence of any clear-cut plan, now agreed upon, to handle a revived traffic in foaming brew.

Mr. Garner Predicts

APPEALS for help are no novelty, unhappily for generous-hearted givers with pinched purses, and thrice unhappily for the needy with purses long empty. The story of exhausted savings, broken families, undernourished children, sickness, hopelessness, has nothing now to commend it to us except its bitter truth. As the preparations for the winter of 1932 begin to be made, and relief agencies in every locality throughout the country are mobilized, at the call of the President and under the direction of Mr. Baker, it begins to be evident that we can expect, as yet, no mitigation of the effects of three years of hardship; rather, in spite of the unquestionable pick-up in conditions, the millions at the bottom face greater difficulties now than they did a year ago. This is the burden of much of Mr. Baker's statement. The condition is one of dreadful seriousness. In this drive, of

To the Communities

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the National Association of Community Chests, to raise local funds and rouse local responsibility to a needed new pitch, surely no one with any surplus of goods or money will dare not to give. No one with eyes to see distress will dare not to be compassionate. No one with energies free will dare not to help. A great English Catholic, visiting us, called it our glory to be a nation of good neighbors; and this reflects something deeper than the mere mode of our sociological development; it reflects the profound yet often inarticulate Christianity that is still so sturdy a remnant of the American heritage. Mr. Hoover was happily inspired in the phrases by which he defined the community, the neighborly, spirit, that not only gives but feels. To reach those in desperate need through neighborhood contacts and solidarity is the most efficient and the most humane way. But even more, it taps and utilizes a spiritual reservoir that is peculiarly and thoroughly American.

On Girl Scouts

THE QUESTION perhaps most succinctly indicated by the old rhyme about puppy dogs' tails and candy and curls, and girls being everything that's nice and boys being "horrid," in spite of the rhyme coming out flatly in favor of the girls, has never been settled beyond peradventure of bringing it up carefully. For instance, to approach the subject from the lowest level in anticipation of getting on to higher things, crime statistics tell certainly that girls are nicer. Though there have emerged a few lurid "gun molls," the proportion of crime committed by females is almost negligible. This is in spite of the fact that girls equally with boys are subjected to all the incidence of modern city ugliness and crowded living conditions. They equally are under the influence of moving pictures that romanticize getting on in worldly luxuries at the expense of morals and that are substituting crime action stories for the old Wild West adventures. And under prohibition, drinking that can at least be described as indecorous, flask drinking, barroom and speakeasy drinking, and all the rest of it has become increasingly prevalent among girls and women.

IT REALLY settles nothing to say that girls just are nicer, because they eat more candy and have curls, and boys have a different molecular consistency, compounded into elements of violence. The old nonsense about profound biological difference has been pretty well disposed of, on the one hand by careful empirical scientists, and on the other hand rapidly by women themselves under modern conditions approaching sex equality. The factor that girls are more protected by home influences than boys seems to be a disappearing one: the girls are away at school as much time as the boys, and in the crowded sections of cities they play in streets, doorways and areas approximately as unshielded as the boys, while the daughters of the wealthy are away at their clubs or in their cars with quite as much independence as their brothers. Any conclusion of the question is at best bound to be tentative, but one sure thing stands out, and that is that in all our concern for saving wayward boys through improved recreational facilities, we must not lose sight of what we have of a heritage of bona fide niceness, sterling goodness in the girls who are growing up under modern conditions.

MRS. NICHOLAS F. BRADY, chairman of the board of directors of the Girl Scouts, emphasized this point admirably at the recent convention of the Scouts' National Council. She described the joys and benefits of girls who by Girl Scouting were given opportunities that otherwise would have been denied them of camping, of trips and life in the open, under the care and tutelage of trustworthy leadership. She pointed to the fact that, in a changing world, the adjustments which have been required of girls have been far greater than those required of boys. Teaching the time-honored virtues of honesty, thrift, cheerfulness, loyalty, kindness and courage (all very real things to youth, that, given the proper direction, they do embrace joyfully and recognize as the true way of living), Girl Scouting helps to preserve these qualities and orient girls for the observance of them in a social order where the old individual sanctities of the home, as a realistic matter of fact, have largely given way to new conditions. A fine spirit of democracy is also taught, and this offers opportunities probably of the greatest profit to girls from the more privileged classes, to appreciate the world they live in and their opportunities for a neighborliness that has been one of the distinct, flavorous and good things of American living. "The essential of the program," said Mrs. Brady, "is the constructive use of leisure time through play." Certainly this is appropriate to youth, both in the aspect of providing facilities for play and of seeing that these contribute to decent character. The realities of the swimming and camping and hiking facilities provided by the Girl Scouts are most impressive in regard to the amount of healthy fun returned for a very small outlay. As Mrs. Brady pointed out, fifty cents can be a large item in the budgets of some families these days, but it will be a crying shame if any girl for the lack of this amount should be denied the opportunities of being a Scout and sharing the things they enjoy in common. Those who haven't a girl but have a half-dollar, may profitably take steps to get the two together.

The Maillefert Case

THERE is nothing vindictive in our saying that the conviction, on the charge of manslaughter, of the Florida prison guard Courson, in the horrible Maillefert case, seems just and right. There was nothing vindictive in our feeling that the recent exoneration of the eight policemen who stood trial in the Mineola third-degree killing, was bound to appear generally as a miscarriage of justice. We were not

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present at either trial, and have no knowledge beyond that of the ordinary reading citizen everywhere, of the merits of either case. It may be that Courson was the victim of cooked-up evidence, as his counsel is of course claiming in moving for repeal; it may be that there was an overwhelming probability of the innocence of the eight policemen. But we do not believe it, and almost no one anywhere believes it. In both cases there was present that grim requisite for criminal indictment, the *corpus delicti*. The man in Mineola was killed outright at the police station; the Maillefert boy was found dead in circumstances so dreadful that it cannot be supposed that proof of suicide (which we incidentally do not believe will be forthcoming) would alter either the moral or the legal guilt of those responsible. No one with sense claims that the problem of dealing with suspects and criminals is easy. No one with sense believes in softness. But we must believe in justice, even if a hard justice; we must believe in decency. We must clear out the sadist and the brute from positions that give them scope and seeming impunity, if we are to keep healthy-minded on this whole vital matter of policing and penalizing, and to save the credit of two branches of the public service which have their quota of careful, responsible and devoted servants.

Names and Roses

THE AMUSING game of Spoof-the-Critic has been played through the ages, and is still going strong. Even today you can draw an audience of people whose indignant suspicions are vindicated, by telling what *Blackwoods* did to Keats. Even today you can elicit chuckles of not wholly disinterested relish by relating that the great Swinburne, upon being told by a wicked friend that "Three Blind Mice" was "an ancient Florentine *ritornello*," professed to hear in it "all the subtle and cruel beauty of the Medici." And readers of newspapers will be ready with a couple of very contemporary instances. There is the new stage group which, it is alleged, plans to put on an anonymous play to test the critics' ability to detect whether an unlabeled dramatic piece is by (possibly) Eugene O'Neill, or by (possibly) Anne Nichols. And there is the more serious criticism of American art critics which the illustrious painter, Mr. Childe Hassam, has just celebrated his seventy-third birthday by emitting. According to Mr. Hassam, young American artists have talent second to none in the world, but lacking the European label, they are unappreciated and quite neglected by the generality of those writing about art. (He noted, among the honorable exceptions, Royal Cortissoz and Elisabeth Luther Cary.)

WE FEEL quite unable to match statistics with Mr. Hassam in his own field, and we admire his chivalry in riding out to do battle for the young, since he himself, he says, has made plenty of money at painting. But we should like to utter a timid word in defense of literary and dramatic critics. We do not imagine the Stage Society will have as much fun as it evidently thinks it will. If it withholds its author's name, it is relatively sure of sound opinions from most of the critics. It is the names that confuse and hypnotize. In spite of *Blackwoods* and Keats, we think it could be proved by count that the critic's attitude to obscure or unknown writers is usually as generous as is reasonable, and oftener right than wrong. His nose is apt to detect the rose, even though it be called snake-weed; it is when the snake-weed is planted in the rose garden, and plainly marked, "Rose tree," that that nose goes astray and, as likely as not, proclaims the authentic presence of the heavenly bouquet. But for the rest, we think the critic is represented fairly, on the whole, by the nameless man who had a brief moment in the newspapers a few years ago, whose train stopped beside a golf course long enough for him to observe an unidentifiable figure getting ready to drive. "This," said the man as his train began to move, "is very remarkable. On his form, that is the best golf player in the world." It was. It was Robert Tyre Jones of Atlanta.

TRAILING CLOUDS OF GLORY

IT HAS been admitted that ours is not an age of poetry. The traveling salesman, the golfer, the radio announcer and the motorist are hardly the only ones to have said so. Publishers will tell you as much, even though most of them have lost far less money on verse than they have on fiction. Spengler wrote two books to prove it, and there have been innumerable minor Spenglers. Even more convincing is the undertow of Mr. Alfred E. Smith's first summary of editorial experience: "There are probably more poets, or would-be poets, to the square inch in this country than one ever suspects unless one becomes editor of a magazine." And knowing it one can hardly realize what it means.

Nevertheless we hazard the guess that a period of creative poetic activity is just around the corner. This remark is sadly like various eminent prognostications on another matter entirely. But we shall lay our evidence on the table with more confidence than is normal just now. To begin with, no editor can fail to notice the parallel existing between the present and the early Elizabethan age. Then as now there were innumerable poetasters, many of them exceedingly bad but some astonishingly good. Young college men were going to London from the universities with the more or less laudable ambition to effect a compromise between the board bill and literature. Anthologies absorbed much which could not be otherwise published. The one thing the Elizabethans lacked was a magazine; and as things are now, the young Americans will soon resemble them.

Poetry in those days was most lyrical, only the bards who enjoyed royal favor (the equivalent of the largesse now bestowed on Robinson, Masefield and one

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or two others) could devote themselves to "Faerie Queens." There was a positive and persistent demand for songs, and these seem to have found composers worthy of them. The year 1932 sees relatively few people lifting their voices to chant Miss Millay or Signor Tate. Yet signs exist to indicate that the radio will soon have to make a real effort of sort which would have appealed to the Elizabethans. From increasingly large sections of the public—if straw votes mean anything—comes the lament that broadcasters resort either to operatic arias, to spirituals or to trash. It requires no great agility as a prophet to predict that something will have to be done. A public educated into having the rudiments of taste (and after all it is the person with some taste who can now afford to keep a radio and buy the things it advertises) wants lyrics which make sense and music endowed with relatively the same characteristics. In like manner, the modern concert program can't go on forever with "Deep River," "Kathleen Mavourneen" and Tosti's "Goodbye." It is utterly ridiculous, finally, to expect that American music will be born as a flock of full-fledged symphonies and operas. To possess vitality, these things must develop out of simple melodies. What Mr. Masefield says in another connection is applicable here: "You cannot have supreme thought save as the tall flowers rising from a great mass of thought."

The magazine into which strips of verse are inserted even as a plate of roast beef is garlanded with parsley has never been the proper medium of poetry. In certain far-off halcyon years THE COMMONWEAL was able to afford a weekly page of verse; and it is surprising to look back and see that, though the average quality of the lyrics it now publishes is probably higher, it was the page which brought it a reputation as a magazine of poetry. Yet even this was no becoming niche for so exalted an art. Poetry as reading-matter demands, by way of compensation for the loss of music, so sustained a separateness that only a good reader's leisure and meditativeness can suffice. That sounds like a good deal; and yet here again we speak our prophecy unblushingly.

Poetic criticism is a very tentative essay always, and the libraries are full of enthusiastic compliments to bards who have long since gained their well-earned reward of oblivion. Yet even here one must make haste slowly. Hardly a single poet lauded by competent judges fails to prove in some manner interesting. His name will crop up anew—as Cowley's did after Francis Thompson—and some eager mind will find voyaging among his pages a stimulant exercise (to borrow a phrase ourselves). The trouble has been, rather, a dearth of adequate criticism. For far too long a time verse was taught and understood as a means for expressing a proverb in several lines. Or it was a very pretty frill which assorted minor Darwins clung to lest, like their illustrious forebear, they should find themselves out in the cultural cold. And since proverbs are a drug on the market and frills only rarely important, the outlook for poetry was decidedly bad.

Today an extraordinary (which word is always relative) sharpness of critical discernment is ours to share. Merely to enumerate some of those who have helped us to see poetry for what it is, testifies to a rapid and almost startling change: Robert Bridges, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, I. A. Richards and, of course, that valiant older pioneer, George Saintsbury, without whom most of us would be reading verse far less appreciatively and profitably. But we have in mind rather certain fresh philosophic approaches "to the Muse"—essays which, because of the manner in which they leave merely superficial matters behind in order to venture closer to the "mystery," seem to carry us off to new roads unexplored. As just one instance, the book which Mr. Charles Williams has recently dedicated to "The English Poetic Mind" (Oxford University Press) may be named. Few volumes of critical writing so clearly adjoin marked individuality to skill in effecting a summary of newer ideas.

Here, to begin with, is the dictum that "poetry is a thing *sui generis*"—an art which utilizes materials of history, doctrine, ethics and other realms, but which exists because it has something of its own to say. But what is that something? Mr. Williams succeeds remarkably well in conveying at least the adumbrations of the answer to his readers. Very possibly the specific content of the "crisis" in the poets may be different from what he says it is—or Shakespeare's "Troilus" may not possess the significance he attributes to it, or the meaning of Wordsworth's "Prelude" may be not quite what he makes it out to be. For our part, we believe that Mr. Williams has probed deeply and well. However all that may be, the student of such a book will know what manner of meaning he is to look for, and will be awakened to the sovereign importance of looking.

And that is the point. Just as poetry was abandoned by the average citizen because nothing he was told to look for in it seemed to be worth the time and trouble, so our time should be aroused by the newer critics to a sense of the dearth created by the absence of poetry. Of course it is possible that the arousing will never take place. To a certain extent the thread of that possibility carries the fate of our civilization. Yet a negative result would not be final if the poets themselves took heart. As Mr. Williams says very nicely, "it is surely true that the chief impulse of a poet is, not to communicate a thing to others, but to shape a thing, to make an immortality for its own sake." And so a careless age might put on immortality unawares. But we shall not turn traitors to our optimism. The tenor of some contemporary verse should mislead no one. As our author says once again, "To begin with a flea and end with God is almost the habit of English verse." If we are at present still among the fleas, the end of the story may nevertheless appear in due time.

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THE CHURCH IN DANGER IN MEXICO

By FRANK C. HANIGHEN

During the past weeks, Mexico has once again definitely inaugurated a religious war. Although the signal happened to be the publication of the Holy Father's encyclical on conditions in Mexico, the roots of this conflict must be looked for in events which have followed the truce arranged by the late Mr. Dwight Morrow. Some of these events are summarized and diagnosed in the following paper, the author of which knows Mexican politics at first hand and has kept in close touch with them. Needless to add, the subject is of great and dolorous importance to every American citizen.—The Editors.

IN THE past few weeks disquieting news comes from across the Rio Grande. The Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Ruiz y Flores, was expelled by order of the federal government; the Archbishop of Mexico was arrested and threatened with exile; churches were closed in the territory of Lower California and the legislature of the state of Vera Cruz passed a law empowering their government to convert the churches to other than sacred use. Despatches like these would have been alarming in 1925 when the great anti-clerical war broke out. Is another war brewing, of the same nature and magnitude? Is the Church in grave danger of annihilation? And what have these happenings to do with the recent shift in politics, the election of a new president?

First of all, these events are but part of the century-old conflict between Church and State. The veritable war which raged between the years 1925-1929 was brought to a peace—rather, a truce—in the latter year by the diplomacy of Dwight Morrow. But it was only a truce and the anti-clerical element chose last December, on the occasion of the famous Guadalupe celebration when all Catholic Mexico was represented at the shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe just outside the capital, to break the pact. The lever they used was the provision in the Constitution allowing states to limit the number of priests. Thus Tabasco which had driven out all priests, and Vera Cruz which had limited them to eleven, influenced the federal government to reduce the number in the capital district to twenty-four; Guerrero ruled that there should be only one to 15,000 population; Oaxaca, one to 10,000; and various other states followed suit.

Before proceeding farther, it is perhaps necessary to explain that the old excuse of an excess number of *sacerdotes* to communicants is of the most transparent nature. There have never been too many priests in proportion to Catholics in Mexico, in spite of much propaganda to the contrary. In its most powerful state, before the various anti-clerical laws were passed last century, there were but 10,000 priests in Mexico, which was but one priest to 2,000 inhabitants; of course in the past few decades, due to war and persecution, the priesthood has been reduced to less than half that amount, making the proportion more nearly one to 5,000. Baptists in this country have about 30,000 pastors for their flocks or about one to 300. In England there is one Anglican clergyman for each 125 communicants, while Irish Catholics enjoy one priest to 1,000 communicants. It is evident therefore that the drive for restriction of priests is but a pretense—a means to the end of reducing the practice of the Catholic religion.

Have these laws been but the thinly veiled effort of the government to destroy the Church? It is not so simple as all that, and to explain what is back of these anti-clerical outbreaks it is necessary to understand the political situation. Americans may be surprised to know that Mexico is not a republic conducted on democratic and popular lines. Elections are a farce, and they are controlled by the National Revolutionary party which is as much the dictator of the nation's affairs as the Fascisti are in Italy. Recently the Mexican press announced that not a single deputy or senator outside of the party was seated in Congress, and wise-crackers riddled, "Why is the P.N.R. [the National Revolutionary party] like a monolith? Because it is a solid bloc."

But there is not so much unanimity as is supposed. The radical anti-clerical deputies from the tropical states of Vera Cruz and Tabasco together with their sympathizers throughout the country, still embittered by the aftermath of the war of 1925-1929, form a bloc within the party and they seize every occasion to precipitate an assault on the Church. They are the Reds, the Jacobins who swayed and stampeded the P.N.R. and of course the Congress to pass the drastic laws last winter, and for a time their spirit seemed to dominate these Mexican Fascisti. But to pursue the analogy further, where is the Mussolini to govern and dominate these black shirts? For their general conservative trend in economic matters makes these P.N.R. members more akin to the Italian party than to the Bolsheviks.

Mexico has a weakness for dictators. We may remember strange old Santa Anna, the baroque despot who off and on ruled the country over twenty years; and a much wiser man, Porfirio Diaz, whose thirty-year régime led to the terrible revolutionary days of 1910-1920 and the great Mexican slogan of "effective suffrage and no reëlection." This cry represented a reaction which perhaps has spent itself. While the last two presidents, Portes Gil and Ortiz Rubio, hardly met the specifications of a dictator, there is nevertheless reason to think that Mexico in reality has presiding over her Fascisti, a Mussolini, a Diaz who is dictator in all but name.

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Just a month ago a strange phenomenon took place which makes most clear this situation. The President, Ortiz Rubio, who had been but the puppet of the P.N.R.—an amiable but weak leader for such a turbulent party—was obliged to resign as a result of clashes with an unofficial but potent figure in the background. Ordinarily it would be supposed that the P.N.R. would meet in their council chamber in Mexico City and name a successor. But no, a stream of motor cars left the city and passed over the mountains to the town of Cuernavaca. There a famous *jefe* (chief) from across the Rio Grande, Dwight Morrow, had his summer house; and there centuries before, the most vigorous dictator of all, Hernando Cortez, built his castle. It was not far from these great mediaeval walls, which still stand as a sinister reminder of autocracy, in a sumptuous hacienda, that the P.N.R. leaders found their chief, the maker of presidents, the man behind the party, the first *jefe* of Mexico, Plutarco Elías Calles.

That name does not spell exactly tolerance for Catholics, in view of his war on the Church during the last decade. But there is reason to believe that Calles has grown conservative. At least in an economic way. Due to the influence of Dwight Morrow, he dropped his Socialistic policies toward oil, industry, labor and agrarian reforms and, wealthy and conservative, he stands as quite a different figure from the man who was hailed less than ten years ago as the Trotsky of Mexico.

It is interesting to trace how the former radical has become a conservative, how he has sought to master these fire-eaters from Vera Cruz and Tabasco and how he has come back to be the real arbiter of Mexico's affairs. The government found they needed him when the unruly generals broke out in revolution in 1929. He left private life (after the expiration of his term as president in 1928 he had retired to become a simple citizen) and as commander of the army he crushed the rebellion; then again Cincinnatus-like, he went back to the plow of his extensive estates. A silver crisis over a year ago called him again, and he became first Secretary of the Treasury, and then Secretary of War.

They jested in Mexico: "Why is President Ortiz Rubio like the subway passage under the corner of the Calle Independencia and Calle San Juan de Letran? Because he is under Calles." It was true, the President was largely a figure head. Whenever any of the provincial politicians came to the capital they always paid a visit first to the house in Cuernavaca before seeing the President. When Ortiz Rubio became absolutely bereft of power last summer, he could do no else than resign and allow a business partner and intimate friend of Calles, General Abelardo Rodriguez, to be elected as president—after that significant pilgrimage which the leaders of the P.N.R. made to Cuernavaca.

But to return to the situation last winter. When the radicals started the assault on the Church, Calles was indifferent to it or perhaps opposed to it. He deemed financial issues paramount. But the radicals reproached him with being old and conservative and, stung by their taunts, he reacted, allowed the restrictive legislation to go through and used the Church fight to divert public dissatisfaction with business and monetary affairs—an excellent "red herring."

The Church lost ground, some provisions which allowed her to name the priests who were to register were revoked, and the truce which Mr. Morrow and friends made in 1929 was broken by the government. Archbishop Ruiz y Flores has made herculean efforts to conciliate the government and keep peace; the Pope too has ordered that no violent opposition to laws be made, and his recent encyclical while perhaps badly timed was peaceful in tone. But the government chose this pronouncement of the Pope to drive out Archbishop Ruiz y Flores and to use the bogy of papal interference in order to attract radical support to their new President, Rodriguez.

In the Papal Delegate's expulsion rests another danger. The Church in Mexico too has its radical and conservative wings. The former, smarting under the real wrongs of the Church, believe in violent and strong resistance to the government and they bitterly criticize the conciliators under the Papal Delegate. When I was in Mexico last summer I read several radical Catholic newspapers which expressed these views. One characterized Father Burke of Washington, Dwight Morrow and Portes Gil, who jointly brought about the truce of 1929, as "the world, the flesh and the devil." Now with the Papal Delegate absent, many of these radical Catholics may revert to desperate means and the militant tactics of the "Cristeros" may be invoked.

But in this, as in other situations, there are some rays of hope. The government, having made its grand-stand play, may find it possible to relax some of the laws. Already Archbishop Pascual Diaz, who was arrested, has been released and permitted to officiate in churches in Mexico City. The government will undoubtedly think twice before Mexico is rushed into a bloody and expensive internecine war. Hasty visits to that hacienda over the mountains may take place, and perhaps some of the leaders may drop in on their way back from Cuernavaca at the American Embassy. Ambassador Reuben Clark caused much newspaper comment a few weeks ago by publicly embracing Archbishop Diaz. And behind it all sits the dark, enigmatic figure of the strong man of Mexico—General Calles. Will he completely discipline the Reds, will he become absolute master of Mexico, and if he does will he see the advantage of a satisfied Church, protected in its freedom of worship and liberty of conscience? The next few months may tell. At present there is surely no one, of whatever faith he may be, who will refuse to join in the hope that a new era of religious persecution will be cut short.

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WAS REVOLUTIONARY AMERICA DRY?

By GEORGE HOLLADAY McKEE

WE ARE informed by Allied Forces of Dry Campaigners, by Prohibition Enforcement Clubs and by certain Methodist Episcopal (South) preachers that the Democratic party is "traditionally prohibitionist." Keeping in mind that prohibition has been a political issue with the Democratic party during only a comparatively short part of its hundred years or more of life, and least of all was it so in the beginning, since the question of tradition is raised it is interesting to inquire what really were the reactions toward the burning question of alcohol of those statesmen who may be considered as founders of the Democratic party.

Although Benjamin Franklin died in the spring of 1790, before the definite formation of the two great political parties, some historians—among them the careful and conscientious J. Parton—consider him as the founder of the Democratic party. The last product of his pen was a cordial letter to Jefferson. His legitimate grandson and spiritual heir, Benny Bache, strongly defended the Jeffersonian party (then known as "Republican") in his paper and waged a bitter war against Federalists. The first number of the *Aurora,* appearing in 1790, bore the slogan "Freedom of the Press Is the Stronghold of Liberty."

If this "Apostle of Modern Times," as Franklin is called in his last biography, is one of the founders of democracy, what were his views on prohibition? It is true that in his "Autobiography," which he wrote to be transmitted to future generations, he tells us that he was stronger than the English lads who drank beer. Also in his list of thirteen "Virtues" he puts first: "Temperance—Eat not to dulness, drink not to elevation." And yet in 1778, Franklin's stock of wine, which had frequent turnovers, consisted of 1,040 bottles: 258 of red and white Bordeaux, 15 of old Bordeaux, 21 of Champagne, 326 bottles of White Mousseux, 113 of red Burgundy, and 148 bottles of Xérès, for Franklin was very fond of this heavy Spanish wine, and his friends often sent him bottles as presents. His cellar was stocked by the Chevalier O'Gorman, Irish son-in-law of that celebrated Chevalier d'Eon who had spent years in England disguised as a woman. No doubt Franklin, in regard to wine, thought as the Indian chief whom he quotes in regard to liquor-drinking:

> The Great Spirit, Who made all things, made everything for some use, and whatever use He designated anything for, that use it should always be put to.

To an intimate friend, Franklin wrote:

> You have frequently cheered me, my very dear friend, with your excellent drinking songs. In return I am going to edify you with a few Christian, moral and philosophical reflections on the same subject.

"In vino veritas," says the Sage. The truth is in wine. Before Noah, therefore, men having only water to drink, became abominably wicked, and were justly exterminated by the water it pleased them to drink.

The good man Noah, having seen all his contemporaries perish by this foul drink, took a natural aversion to it, and God, that he might quench his thirst, created wine, and revealed to him the art of making it. By the aid of this liquor he discovered innumerable truths, and since his time the word divine has been in use signifying originally to discover by means of wine (*vin*). Thus the Patriarch Joseph claims to "divine" by means of a cup or glass of wine. Liquor received this name as a sign that it was not a human but a "divine" invention, another proof against M. Gebelin of the antiquity of the French language. Moreover, since this time every excellent thing, including the Deity, has been referred to as "divine" and "divinity."

It is customary to speak of the conversion of water into wine at the Marriage of Cana as a miracle, but by the goodness of God this conversion takes place every day before our eyes. Water falls from the skies onto our vineyards. There it penetrates the grapes of the vine and is changed into wine, a continual proof that God loves us and that He likes to see us happy. The particular miracle at Cana was done merely to perform this operation in a sudden case of need.

It is also true that God has instructed man to make wine into water, but what kind of water? Into eau-de-vie. And thereby they can themselves perform at need the miracle of Cana, and convert common water into that excellent wine known as "punch."

My good brother, be as kindly and well disposed as He, and do not spoil the good work He has done, wine for our rejoicing. When you see your neighbor at table pour wine into his glass do not hasten to pour water after it. Why should you wish to drown the truth? It is probable that your neighbor knows better than you what is good for him. Perhaps he wishes a few drops only to comply with the fashion. Perhaps he does not like water. Perhaps he does not want another to notice how little water he puts into his glass. Therefore only offer water to children; it is a false and extremely inconvenient kindness. I say this to you as a man of the world, but I shall finish as I started, as a good Christian, by making you a religious observation of great importance, and drawn from the Holy Scriptures. Remember that the Apostle Paul very seriously advised Timothy to put wine into his water for his health's sake, but no one of the Apostles nor any of the Holy Fathers ever advised the putting of water into wine.

P. S. To confirm you in your piety, and recognition of the *Divine* Providence, reflect on the position Providence has given the elbow. You know that animals which depend on water they find on the ground for their drink, if they have long legs, have also long necks, so that they can reach their drink without the trouble of kneeling. But man, who was destined to drink wine, has to be able to carry the glass to his mouth. . . . [Here follows a description of the drawings.]

Let us then adore, glass in hand, this beneficent Wisdom. Let us adore and drink.

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The original letter is in the Rosenwald collection in Philadelphia.

The crabbed Scotchman, William Maclay, Senator from Pennsylvania (1789-1791), can with justice be called the first Jeffersonian Democrat. The First Congress was called together at New York in April, 1789, and the Sage of Monticello, then Ambassador to France, did not report as Secretary of State until eleven months later. Maclay began to differ with the Federalists from the very beginning. He feared and detested the party of ceremony, high tone and strong government; the party which, according to Charles Beard, "was striving to surround the new republican system with pomp and circumstance to dazzle the forerunners of Moronia—ancestors of the tabloid readers."

The "Journal" of William Maclay, which shows that he was foremost in combating the extreme monarchical views of the Federalists, was not published until 1890—his descendants evidently fearing that he had been too severe in his criticisms of George Washington, John Adams and other eminent personages of the Federalist party. Actually, Maclay had the highest respect for Washington; it was John Adams, the Vice-President, who was his *bête noire*. One entry runs as follows:

> His [John Adams's] grasping after titles has been observed by everybody. Mr. Izard [Senator from South Carolina], after describing his air, manner and deportment . . . concluded with applying the title of "His Rotundity" to him. . . . God forgive me for the vile thought, but I cannot help thinking of a monkey put into breeches for the first time when I see him betray such evident marks of self-conceit.

A few quotations at random from this diary that proves him a stanch Democrat will also show that he took wine as a matter of course:

> May 2. The fore part of this day was very pleasant. An east wind blew up and deformed the afternoon. I, however, walked a good deal. I have drunk wine with the Speaker at the rate of about three glasses a day. . . .
>
> May 17. This being club day, I went to dine with the Pennsylvania mess. We sat down to dinner at half after three. Eating stopped our mouths until about four, and from that to near nine I never heard such a scene of bestial badney kept up in my life. Mr. Morris is certainly the greatest blackguard in that way that I ever heard open a mouth. [The Morris referred to is Robert Morris, Federalist Senator from Pennsylvania, who is sometimes credited with having financed the Revolutionary War.]
>
> May 28. No debate of any consequence in the Senate. I felt exceedingly indisposed in the fore part of the day, and dreaded going into company. The Speaker entertained. I, however, joined them and drank a few glasses, and felt much better. . . .
>
> August 27. We went to the President's for dinner. It was the most solemn dinner I ever sat at, scarce a word said until the cloth was taken away. Then the President filling a glass of wine with great formality drank to the health of every individual round the table. Everybody imitated him, charged and recharged glasses, and such a buzz of "Health, Sir" and "Health, Madam," never had I heard before. Indeed I had liked to have been thrown out in the hurry; but I got a little wine in my glass and passed the ceremony. The ladies sat a good while and the bottles passed about. . . .

Millions of our citizens consider Jefferson as the first interpreter of the rights of man, the most eminent apostle of democracy in America, the great heart that struggled always for the well-being of the masses. His words of 1776 would apply today. He once wrote:

> The executive power in our government is not the only, perhaps not even the principal, object of my solicitude. The tyranny of the legislature is really the danger most to be feared and will continue to be so for many years to come.

Would he consider that the Eighteenth Amendment and Volstead Act fall in the class of "a long train of abuses and usurpations" which reduce the people "under absolute despotism" and which they should "throw off" or "alter"?

The information we have as to Jefferson classifies him as an advocate of the use of wines (not light) and beer. His daughter, Martha, and Bacon, his overseer, testify that he never drank ardent spirits or strong wines. During the later years of his life he wrote:

> I have lived temperately, eating little animal food and that not as an aliment so much as a condiment for the vegetables which constitute my principal diet. I double, however, the doctor's glass and a half of wine, and even treble it with a friend, but half its effects by drinking weak wines only. The ardent wines I cannot drink, nor do I use ardent spirits in any form. Malt liquors and cider are my table drinks. . . .

Jefferson seemed to have a special predilection for the Madeira. Since this vintage averages 22 percent alcohol, it would be interesting to know what he and Martha ("Patsy") Randolph considered as strong or ardent wines! In his account-book we have a memorandum of the duration of each pipe up to 1804. A pipe contained 477 liters, or about 131 gallons.

MADEIRA

No.	Received	Broached	Finished	Lasted
1	1801 May 3	1801 May 15	1801 Nov. 3	Excluding absence 3½ mo.
2	1801 June 12	1801 Nov. 3	1802 June 6	6 mo.
3	1801 June 12	1802 June 6	1803 April 10	7 mo.
4	1801 Sept. 28	1803 April 10	1804 May 28	10 mo.
5	1801 Sept. 28	1804 May 28	1805 May 15 sent remain. 76 gal. to Monticello	
6	1803 Mar. 3	1805 May 15	1806 June	10 mo., 17 da.
7	1803 Mar. 3	1806 July	1807 Nov. 25	10 mo., 19 da.
8	1804 Mar. 19	1807 Nov. 25		

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Neither did Jefferson have an antipathy for Champagne. The following letter is addressed to General Muhlenberg, collector of the port at Philadelphia, re 200 bottles of Champagne received from the Spanish Minister, "100, December 11, 1802, and 100, January 10, 1803."

> Dear Sir: M. D'Yrujo, the Spanish Minister here, has been so kind as to spare me 200 bottles of Champagne, part of a large parcel imported for his own use and consequently privileged from duty; but it would be improper for me to take the benefit of that. I must therefore ask the favor of you to take the proper measures for paying the duty, for which purpose I enclose you a bank-check for $22.50, the amount of it. . . .

Washington's first Cabinet consisted of only four members, including the Attorney-General. Therefore Jefferson, as Secretary of State, had duties that today fall under three or four departments. The President seems to have entrusted to Jefferson his Department of the Interior, to judge by the following letter of September 6, 1760, to William Short, the American Chargé d'Affaires at Paris.

> Dear Sir: . . . The President left this morning on his way to Mount Vernon. He engaged me some time ago to get him some wines from France, to wit, 40 dozen of Champagne, 30 dozen of Sauterne, 20 dozen of Bordeaux, and 10 dozen of Frontignan, and he took a note of their prices in order to furnish me with a bill of exchange sufficient to cover the costs and charges. In the multiplicity of his business before his departure he has forgot to do this: and it remains that we do not permit him to be disappointed of his wine by this omission. . . . I write for wines for my own use at the same time. These will amount to about 550 livres. I have sent out to seek for a bill of exchange to that amount. . . ."

Washington was perfectly willing to leave this question of enology to his competent Secretary of State. Jefferson imported large quantities of wine and kept a record of every bottle, which, he explained, was to "try the honesty of Martin," the Negro slave who looked after his cellar. We read in his account-book that his wines cost him the following sums in the years named:

$2,622.33	in	1801
1,975.72	"	1802
1,753.57	"	1803
2,668.94	"	1804
546.41	"	1805
659.38	"	1806
553.97	"	1807
75.58	"	1808
Total: $10,855.90		
Average per year, one-eighth: $1,356.98		

This decrease in the consumption of wine represents no aversion to the article. Anxious about his debts, he was forced to retrench considerably during his second term. His grocery bill of $2,003.71 for 1801 dropped to $258.00 in 1808. His five-year sojourn in France had given Jefferson a taste for French refinements. In 1790 he imported a French cook, a certain Petit. Patrick Henry accuses Jefferson of having "renigged his native victuals," but in fact Jefferson had learned that a real French or Italian cuisine breaks down completely when the food is served without wine. He had seen the place of beauty and dignity which wine holds in the better circles of French society. From Paris (September 30, 1785), Jefferson wrote to Charles Bellini at William and Mary, the first professor of French in an American college:

> Here it seems that a man might pass a life without encountering a single rudeness. In the pleasures of the table they are far above us, because, with good taste they unite temperance. They do not terminate the most sociable meals by transforming themselves into brutes. I have never yet seen a man drunk in France, even among the lowest of the people.

But with all this rather epicurean record in the matter of wines, Jefferson took his stand in regard to hard liquors. He refers to "the loathsome and fatal effects of whisky, destroying the fortunes, the bodies, the minds and the morals of our people." And the comparatively pure whisky and rum of his day was less destructive than our combinations of a half-dozen different poisonous alcohols. In 1807 he wrote to the brilliant young Swiss, Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury, enclosing a schedule of lower tariffs on ordinary wines:

> I am persuaded that were the duty on cheap wines put on the same ratio with the dear, it would wonderfully enlarge the field of those who use wine, to the expulsion of whisky. The introduction of a very cheap wine (St. George) into my neighborhood, within two years past, has quadrupled in that time the number of those who keep wine, and will ere long increase them tenfold. This would be great gain to the Treasury, and to the sobriety of our country.

Jefferson was, so to speak, a father-confessor to Madison and Monroe, who continued his democratic principles for sixteen years. In 1818 he wrote to the same effect as above to William H. Crawford, Secretary of the Treasury under Monroe. From Monticello on December 13, 1818, he wrote to a M. de Neuville in France:

> I rejoice, as a moralist, at the prospect of a reduction of the duties on wine, by our national legislature. It is an error to view a tax on that liquor as merely a tax on the rich. It is a prohibition of its use to the middling class of our citizens, and a condemnation of them to the poison of whisky, which is desolating their houses. No nation is drunken where wine is cheap; and none sober where the dearness of wine substitutes ardent spirits as the common beverage. It is, in truth, the only antidote to the bane of whisky. Fix but the duty at the rate of other merchandise, and we can drink wine here as cheap

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> as we do grog; and who will not prefer it? Its extended use will carry health and comfort to a much enlarged circle. Everyone in easy circumstances (as the bulk of our citizens are) will prefer it to the poison to which they are now driven by their government. And the treasury itself will find that a penny apiece from a dozen, is more than a groat from a single one.

On another occasion Jefferson wrote that "the drunkard as much as the maniac requires restrictive measures to save him from the fatal infatuations under which he is destroying his health, his family and his usefulness in society." But he did not attempt to apply the restrictive measures to human society as a whole as do the Cannons and McBrides. He was a believer in temperance but not in prohibition. His solution of the problem was:

> a duty on the cheap wines proportional to their first cost . . . and the use of wines not only as an innocent gratification but a healthy substitute for a bewitching poison.

Having completed the historical survey which was the original purpose of this article, may the writer now offer a personal anecdote paralleling Jefferson's experience in regard to drunkenness in France, and a personal opinion? During a six-years' stay in France I saw but one native of France drunk. Returning on a cold night of December, 1925, to my quarters in the Rue Condorcet, Grenoble, I beheld a Frenchman pushing a woman's head against a snow-bank. I protested. Whereupon he answered indignantly, "C'est ma femme, elle a trop bu (It's my wife. She has drunk too much)."

Is it not true that the only position for any party which wishes to claim consistency with Jeffersonian ideals, is to stand for the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, and advocate the passage of a law defining the difference between "distilled" and "fermented" drinks, with a very high tax on the former and a light one on the latter; under which law each state should be permitted to regulate and control the manufacture and sale of all malt, brewed and fermented beverages within its own borders? Thus one of the great principles upon which this government was founded will be restored.

EDISON AND RELIGION

By JOHN F. O'HAGAN

WAS THOMAS A. EDISON an atheist? No question concerning the great inventor has been more widely discussed, and none has been so incorrectly answered. It is time that the facts in the matter should be authoritatively set forth. Before doing so, I ought perhaps to make an awkward bow to the public. Since the time I was a boy, Mr. Edison's door was open to me. As a young man it was my good fortune to become intimately acquainted with him, as a result of my association with his laboratory. There were very few people with whom the "Old Man" would discuss religion. But this subject and the related one of morality were often topics of conversation between us during long hours in the library of the laboratory. At times he asked me to prepare digests of the arguments concerning mooted questions, and these he would then study and talk over from various points of view.

Never was he either an iconoclast or an atheist. The very nature of his work and the logic of his public statements allowed no room for thought that jumps at violent conclusions. I remember that when Dr. Jokichi Takamine, the eminent Japanese chemist, died, Edison showed me a morning paper in which he had noted the fact that Dr. Takamine had been received into the Catholic Church after he had made an exhaustive study of the philosophy of religion. "That was a fine idea of Takamine's," said Mr. Edison. "Remember, I have set aside five years to study religion." This subject he had had literally no time to consider thoroughly. He cheerfully admitted that his knowledge of philosophy or metaphysics was very slight. But the idea of exploring these vast realms of thought continued to appeal to him. "I will invite the leading scholars of the various denominations here, and devote five years to the study of things religious," he said again. "Many of the most logical minds through the ages have been religious."

Small wonder then that after the death of the "Wizard of Menlo Park" his family announced that he had not been an atheist but a "believer in the Supreme Power, the Creator of the universe." Behind these few words was a train of thought and planning that for years plainly indicated Edison's drift toward God. He never asserted that he was an unbeliever, and I have heard him deny on innumerable occasions that he was one, when requests were made by "professional nonbelievers," as he called them, to indorse their pamphlets, propaganda or books. The arena of the godless held no lure for Edison, whose insatiable appetite for truth had fed on years of fact-finding and result-seeking.

As he said to a visiting Belgian priest: "Logical minds have to accept the incontrovertible fact, based upon material evidence, that Creation is the magnificent manifestation of the Almighty Will." When criticized for certain statements of his concerning the soul which had been misinterpreted, he declared: "I would be prostituting my intelligence if I denied the existence of a Supreme Power."

So annoying became many of the leading atheists, including some university professors, that Edison, weigh-

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ing what he termed "their homespun arguments" declared that "they put on smoked glasses and try to make themselves believe the sun is not shining." On one occasion, only a few years ago, when an anti-religion organization sought his endorsement of a book attempting to prove the existence of a permanent conflict of science with religion, Edison, turning to the writer, said: "These fellows remind me of a man sitting on one side of a fence who, although showered with apple blossoms, would have you believe there is no apple tree nearby."

Contrary to public belief Edison often used arguments to refute statements made by those who attempted with a few deft expressions to dismiss the whole fabric into which is woven the logical threads of religious belief. "Science and religion have the same origin and there can be no conflict between them," he once stated to the late Right Reverend Monsignor Patrick F. O'Hare of Brooklyn, whom he would have the writer invite to the laboratory for a discussion of some mooted philosophical or religious questions that were then prominent in the public press.

The saga of scientific searching covering a period of nearly three quarters of a century led Edison to conclude: "Studying cause and effect, one must face the undeniability of a primal beginning. Matter is directed and not directive. Nothing comes from nothing. The perfect orderliness of the universe logically indicates an all-wise Creator, a non-erring Designer that precludes any doubt of the Supreme Intelligence. Why man, himself the most self-sufficient creature in the creative scheme, has no control, except by unnatural means, of the two greatest events in his life, his birth and his death. The Creator allows man to penetrate only those secrets that are good for him. Take hydrogen. It is apparently divisible, but finally it is indivisible. It is a universe in itself. Any of a thousand evidences of the finiteness of man and matter can be had under a microscope or in a test tube. As we grow in comprehension, we realize man's littleness in the infinite scheme of things."

Edison objected to the word create as applied to the work of inventors. He would often say to some flattering visitor: "Man can create nothing. Even his thoughts are but terminal effects communicated from other sources. Constructive imagination applied to the fashioning of materials already supplied by nature enables man to fashion those things we call products and inventions. Man himself is but the instrument of the creative plan. He must depend upon other men and materials about him if he desires to get anywhere."

It remains for me to add a few very personal reminiscences, in the hope that the question of Edison's attitude toward revealed religion may be cleared up once and for all. For sixty-four years Thomas A. Edison made it a habit to give generously to any alms-seeking Sisters of the Catholic Church. It was an inflexible rule that these Sisters were to be granted free access to his factories and laboratory. Upon their visits, if the inventor had money (which he was often without), he would empty his pockets for them. When he was without cash he would borrow from associates in order that he might make his regular contribution to the nuns.

It was a great act of charity performed in Boston in 1867 by the Little Sisters of the Poor that made an indelible impression upon the mind of the great inventor and resulted in his kindliness toward Catholic Sisters during more than half a century.

Arriving destitute in Boston in the winter of 1867, the young telegrapher chanced across an old friend whom he had known in Michigan in the early days of his telegraphic career. This friend, now old, decrepit, penniless, friendless, homeless and hungry was found wandering aimlessly on the streets of the "Hub." Edison attempted to have him admitted to several institutions, but without result. He finally took him to the Home of the Little Sisters of the Poor, who immediately admitted him, nursed him back to health and gave him the only home he knew for the remainder of his life.

This act of charity begot in Edison a benevolent friendliness toward Catholic nuns that was edifying to all those who observed his charity upon their visits to his famous workshops. "If I had a lot of money instead of plants and patents," frequently remarked the noted scientist to the writer, "it would go to these Sisters. Only a few people really know what great work they do."

In the early days of the Edison Electric Lighting Company, the first commercial electric company, the inventor spent much of his time in the concern's headquarters at 65 Fifth Avenue, New York. Here among the frequent callers were the late Father Ducey, rector of St. Leo's Church, in East Twenty-eighth Street, and the late Father Edward Terry, eminent Jesuit scholar, who deciphered the hieroglyphics on the monolith in Central Park. Father Terry, close friend of President Grover Cleveland, at whose invitation he delivered the invocation for the famous Democrat's first inauguration, during which he made his controversy-creating statement that "the story of the Garden of Eden is an epic poem," was often invited with Father Ducey to spend evenings with Edison. Major Charles A. Benton, early associate of Edison, recently stated these three would discuss by the hour questions that confounded most of those present. "These priests," declared Major Benton, "satisfactorily answered and cleared up for Edison many erroneous ideas he entertained regarding important religious subjects."

Before, during and after our entry into the World War, Edison as Chairman of the Naval Consulting Board had most of his technical dealings, in reference to inventions for our sea forces, with Admiral William S. Benson, Chief of the Bureau of Operations, and Rear Admiral R. S. Griffin, Chief of the Bureau of Steam Engineering, both Catholics. For both of these men

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he came to have a very high regard. It is also a strange coincidence that the two Europeans he admired most during the conflagration abroad were the late Cardinal Mercier of Belgium and General Ferdiand Foch of France, "a combination of pen and sword that will triumph" he declared to the writer.

One spring morning before five o'clock the "Old Man" was on his way back home from an all-night session with coal tar experiments at his chemical works in Spring Lake, New Jersey. The government called upon him to produce bases for munitions which had been cut off due to the blockade of German shipping. As we drove up Park Avenue, Orange, in the grey of the dawn we saw hundreds of men coming south out of the streets running into that thoroughfare. "What are all these men doing out so early?" the inventor asked me. "They are going to a five o'clock mission Mass at St. John's," I replied. Whereupon the scientist remarked: "There's no make-believe about their faith."

Upon reading of the long hours of Pope Pius XI and the tremendous volume of correspondence to which he daily gives his personal attention, Edison ordered constructed a special dictating machine finished in gold, silver and ivory, which was sent to the Pontiff with the personal esteem of the inventor. The Holy Father touched by this thoughtful act forwarded a Pontifical Medal with the Apostolic Benediction to the noted scientist. It was the last medal placed in the famous collection of the "Wizard."

Two years later the occupant of the Throne of Peter offered his prayers for the great benefactor of mankind as he lay dying in his home at Glenmont, Llewellyn Park, West Orange, New Jersey. Patrick Cardinal Hayes kept in touch with the condition of the expiring scientist and communicated his information to the Holy See. The Apostolic Delegate at Washington was among the first to send his condolences to the Edison family when the great inventor finally passed into eternity.

Shortly before the "Wizard" lost consciousness he sent for Joseph E. McCoy, for fifty years his "confidential contact man." The "Old Man" knew his time was short, for he said sadly to his old associate: "Mac, my work is done. I've always tried to do the best I could and I never deliberately harmed anyone. I'm ready to go." As he finished the last words he grasped the hand of his old friend and the tears welled up in the grey-blue eyes of the two white-haired coworkers of more than half a century. It was the end of a confidential and happy association that started in the trying days at Menlo Park and followed along the trail to later triumphs.

Edison had confidently believed he would live to be one hundred years old. When he became seriously ill he tried to study his own case. But for the first time in his explorative career neither microscope nor test tube could give him back the answer of his own physical decadence. He went the way of all flesh, for the "immortal" Edison was only mortal after all.

A SOCIAL SYLLABUS

By FRANK A. SMOTHERS

THAT there is a very direct connection between the Catholic classrooms of America and the Catholic cause of social justice must be apparent to all who believe in the efficacy of schools in forming human minds. The task of teaching the social principles of the Popes is not carried single-handed by the schools, while such journals as THE COMMONWEAL and *America* remain in circulation, while scores of bishops and priests stand forth as champions of reform, and while certain associations of Catholic lay people continue to flourish. But it is beyond cavil that if the social doctrines of Popes Leo XIII and Pius XI are to find intelligent acceptance and active support on the part of Catholics generally, the schools must be much astir.

Thus far it may be said that, by and large, they have been doing less in this field than seems reasonable to expect. No man with the most casual understanding of present trends will be likely to deny that it is of extreme importance that Catholics be prepared to help reconstruct our undermined society. Nor will anyone who has read "Quadragesimo Anno" be under any doubt as to the prime emphasis placed by the reigning Pope upon such preparation. To the mind of Pius XI, grappling with the social problem is a battle which simply cannot be shunted aside by Catholics. With the full authority of his office and with the deepest seriousness of purpose, he has called for a crusade in behalf of social justice.

Now, of course, the Pontiff has not outlined in detail precisely what the Catholic schools of America or any other country should do as their share. But clearly they have before them a path of essential service. Unless boys and girls, young men and women, are aroused at school to an interest in this subject, it is hardly likely that as graduates they will, in large numbers, develop such an interest. Therefore the appearance of "A Syllabus on Social Problems," authorized by the National Catholic Educational Association and prepared by a committee of distinguished sociologists, is worth a rousing welcome. Here is something that will bring more than usual courage to all who are demanding Catholic Action against greed, against the tottering tenets of laissez-faire, against that modern economic life which Pope Pius XI has summarized as "hard, cruel and relentless in a ghastly measure."

The committee responsible for this new program of college and university study—for such is the Syllabus's content—is headed by the Reverend Joseph Reiner, S.J., long prominent both as a teacher of sociology and as a leader in practical social movements. His collaborators have been Dr. John A. Lapp, former head of the department of social science at Marquette University; the Reverend John W. R. Maguire, president

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of St. Viator's College and authoritative friend of labor; the Reverend R. A. McGowan, assistant director of the National Catholic Welfare Council's Department of Social Action; and the Reverend Edgar Schmiedeler, O.S.B., director of the Family Life Section of the National Catholic Welfare Council.

When one is an enthusiast for a given project (as I am for this Syllabus and what it implies), he will do well to guard his tongue. And I am guarding my tongue when I say that if the Syllabus is adopted as widely as is hoped by the committee, it will hasten a profound change in the thought of the mass of American Catholics upon social and economic questions. For it proposes that every graduate of a Catholic college or university in the United States henceforth be equipped with at least a fundamental grounding in Catholic social doctrines; that every graduate know the programs of action in this arena laid down by Leo XIII, Pius X, Benedict XV and the reigning Pontiff. Further, it points the way to social instruction in the high schools and even in the parochial schools as well.

A revolution of popular thought, of course, may not come. The Syllabus may not be accepted overnight by our colleges, from one end of the land to the other. But it is not too much to hope that the plan of study it presents, or workable substitutes for it, soon will be exerting solid influence.

Now in the hands of executive officers of most if not all Catholic colleges and universities in America, the Syllabus consists of ninety-seven mimeographed pages, on which is outlined a thoroughly coördinated course, with a large bibliography appended. According to the committee's suggestions, it would be a "six semester hour" course—one calling for three hours of classes each semester of a given year, preferably the sophomore. And it would be required rather than elective.

Of prime importance is the assurance one gathers, in examining its pages, that students following the Syllabus will be led to regard separate social ills or solvents not as isolated problems. The sociology of the Popes is a sociology built with logic upon principles—and so is that of the Syllabus. The nature of man, his purposes on earth, his consequent obligations and parallel rights, are the never-forgotten considerations upon which Leo and Pius have built and upon which the Syllabus builds.

In other words, students of the Syllabus will be studying in the Catholic tradition, which would have men think from cause to effect. And precisely because the underlying causes here considered are sacred causes, the students will have reasons for convictions—not vague musings—on reforms of the social order. For if man possesses a soul, if he is placed on earth to win his way to God, if in that struggle he has need for decent work, a decent home and a sense of reasonable security instead of haunting fear for his livelihood, then the necessity of reform will be self-evident. To students of the Syllabus correction almost inevitably will be regarded not as a pretty "humanitarian" wish but as the only course compatible with Christian morals.

Well-schooled Marxian Socialists and well-schooled Leninists, of course, have their underlying philosophy, also. They, too, think logically—but from a different premise. For the rest, too many of us who are interested, more or less, in reform, think from hazy and undefined bases. Few can tell why, fundamentally, a change is desirable. And when a man cannot tell why he wants a change, it is hardly likely that he will do much to bring it about. It is even doubtful whether tomorrow he will be sure that he wants a change at all. Very likely he will not, if the depression is over and he has a few shares of stock which are mounting temporarily on the New York Stock Exchange.

Catholics have not been immune to such hazy thinking when, indeed, they have thought at all upon social and economic problems. The Syllabus of Father Reiner's committee stands ready not only to set the youth of the Church thinking, but to arm them with Christian logic for Catholic Action.

The course proposed is divided into four parts. First comes a section on "Fundamental Notions." Here it is that the student will be considering the origin and destiny of man, his worth and dignity, the moral law. He will study Socialism and Protestant individualism. He will see how Christian philosophy deals with the rights and duties of man. The nature of justice and charity, the distinction between them, will be discussed.

Part II, termed "Societal Problems," will bring the student into more concrete problems. It will turn his attention to marriage and the family, their history, nature and purposes. It will stress the significance of the family as an economic unit, will dwell upon dangers threatening the family and means for reducing those dangers. Likewise, education as a social force will be noted. And one full chapter of the Syllabus (it contains fourteen all told) will focus serious thought upon recreation and leisure. Father Reiner is of the opinion that to a large extent the future of civilization will be decided in the leisure hours of human beings; college boys and girls who follow the Syllabus, for which he is chiefly responsible, will acquire ideas as to what kind of leisure can make, what kind can break, civilization. Relief and charity problems also appear in Part II, including those connected with orphanage, old age, family poverty, delinquency, criminality, drug addiction and insanity.

Part III will bring the student to "Civic-Political Problems." The origin, nature, power and functions of the state will come under his attention. He will be given an introduction to international relations which, although very brief, will be likely to make him reconsider jingo notions if he has had them.

And last, in logical position, he will study "Economic Problems," the subject of Part IV. Clashing theories of private ownership, including the Christian philosophical theory, will be surveyed. Grave ills of modern capitalism, notably, concentrated control of indus-

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try and concentration of wealth, will be explained. The student will learn something about the wage question, principles governing conditions of labor, profits, unemployment. As solvents of the ills, coöperative systems and the occupational organization of industry, which latter has been so highly recommended by Pope Pius, will be suggested. Nor will the possibilities of government regulation, ownership and operation be neglected; here, of course, the student will observe some very essential principles to help him recognize what may be sound and what may be unsound state intervention or ownership.

The Syllabus is not a text in itself. Texts—most important of all, the papal encyclicals—will be studied in connection with it. Good lectures can vastly enhance its value. The Syllabus method, however, is designed to throw the student, to a considerable extent, on his own. He will be expected to do a good deal of exploring in the books listed in the bibliography. He will learn to make discoveries for himself and will be encouraged to develop a habit of weighing and comparing different theories.

No one claims that such a course will make social scientists of college boys and girls—although it may and probably will stimulate many to become social scientists. But if adopted widely it will help thousands of Catholics to use their influence, cast their ballots, live their lives, in support of Christian social justice. And inasmuch as graduates of Catholic colleges will greatly affect the trend of social thought generally, teaching the Syllabus will bear fruit in the ideas of large numbers who will not learn its doctrines in class halls and study rooms.

I Visit Carmel

Your eyes of infinite kindness meeting mine,
Your hand of quiet resting in my hand
Had been as comforting as oil and wine,
As sweet as water in a desert land.

But in this still room, hopelessly serene,
Why should I seek you, difficult and dear;
In these strange silences with peace between,
How should I vainly think to find you here?

A voice as luminous and cool as dew
Is near me, though I saw not whence it came;
And you are here, sweet, inexplicable you,
Making miraculous music of my name.

Your voice, precursor in my wilderness,
More blessed is, more clear than sight to me;
If there be beauty else I cannot guess,
When you have healed me and when I shall see.

Only I know beatitude begun;
Only I feel no let of cloister bars;
For I have seen a splendor past the sun,
Have heard a voice beyond the listening stars.

SISTER M. MADELEVA.

A MONUMENT TO CHARITY

By GEORGE BARTON

THERE is a venerable four-story brick building at Seventh and Spruce Streets in the city of Philadelphia which stands as a monument to a century and a third of Catholic charity in the Quaker City. It has more than local interest because it represents the first work founded by the Revered Mother Seton after her community had been placed on a firm footing at Emmitsburg. It was the beginning of that chain of orphanages which extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific and in which devoted women care for those who have been left homeless at a helpless age.

It has peculiar significance at this time when well-meaning men and women debate what should be done for the poor. It represents that form of practical philanthropy which had its roots in the very beginning of Christianity. We learn from the Apostolic Constitutions that "orphans as well as widows are always commended to Christian love. The bishop is to have them brought up at the expense of the Church and to take care that the girls be given, when of marriageable age, to Christian husbands, and that the boys should learn some art or handicraft and then be provided with tools and placed in a condition to earn their own living, so that they may be no longer than is necessary a burden to the Church."

St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum was founded under the auspices of the Society of St. Joseph for educating and maintaining poor orphan children in Philadelphia. This is a layman's organization which had its origin in an effort to care for children whose parents had fallen victims to the yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia in 1797. The orphans were boarded with a Catholic woman, but the demand for accommodations increased so rapidly that it was necessary to lease a separate house. This was a dwelling adjoining Holy Trinity Church at Sixth and Spruce Streets, just one block from the present asylum. It was in charge of a competent matron, but as time went on it was threatened with failure, and at a meeting held in old St. Joseph's Church it was agreed that if the work was to thrive it would have to be placed in charge of a religious community. It was then—in 1809—that Father Hurley, the rector of St. Augustine's, made an appeal to Mother Seton to establish a house in Philadelphia. As a result of this request three Sisters of Charity came from Emmitsburg to place the work on an enduring foundation.

While part of the diocesan charities, the Society of St. Joseph provides its own funds and receives no aid from the city or state or from the Community Chest collections. Going over the faded minute books with Secretary Ralph J. Schoettle, of the Board of Managers, one is impressed with the number of notable men who have been proud to share in its management. Turning these pages one constantly finds names that were conspicuous in the history of city, state and nation. For a long series of years, Matthew Carey, one of the first of the notable American publishers, was chairman of the board. Others are Commodore Barry; Captain John Rossiter, another Revolutionary naval man; Mark A. Frenayne, active in planning the present cathedral in Philadelphia; James Campbell, Postmaster-General in the Cabinet of Franklin Pierce; Francis A. Drexel, one of the founders of Drexel, Morgan and Company; John Hughes, afterwards the great Archbishop of New York; P. S. Duponceau, a noted lawyer of the early days; H. E. Borie, whose kinsman was a member of General Grant's Cabinet; and John Keating. It is significant that three generations of physicians of the same name, Atlee, served as medical directors of the institu-

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tion. With them, as with all of the other officials, it was a labor of love.

With such devotedness it is not surprising that the institution, in spite of many handicaps, should have been able to continue its work successfully for 135 years.

An extract from a letter written by Sister Rose White, describes the coming of the Sisters from Emmitsburg to St. Joseph's Asylum:

"Father Dubourg accompanied us as far as Taneytown, giving us lessons of economy all the way. At Taneytown we parted; he continued his journey to Baltimore and we to Philadelphia. We begged hospitality as far as Lancaster, and we stopped with Catholic families who received us kindly. We would have done the same at Lancaster, but we arrived too late and felt a delicacy in disturbing the family to whom we were directed, and whom we would have had to find out the best we could, as we were all strangers to the place. We stopped at a hotel and had only to complain of fine accommodations.

"Next morning, very early, we set off for Philadelphia; and arriving there in the evening, had to inquire our way as we moved through the street, and we knew not even what street we were in.

"Frequently the driver would give us the reins to hold and get down from the carriage and ask at several houses if they could tell us where St. Joseph's Asylum was; no one seemed to understand him.

"He became a little tired, and on one of the Sisters asking him if he had any information to guide him, he replied, 'Oh no, you might as well ask a pig about a holiday as to ask these people where St. Joseph's Asylum is.'

"We drove on without knowing where we were going; but our good angel was with us; for, wearied with going up one street and down another, the driver stopped and thought he would ask again, when, behold! we were before the door of Trinity Church, which was next to the asylum. The carriage being closed, the housekeeper to the priest, a good French woman named Justine, approached it, thinking there was a corpse to be buried.

"When she lifted the curtain, as if by inspiration, she said: 'Are you not from St. Joseph's?'

"'Yes, who are you?' we replied.

"'Reverend Father Roelof's housekeeper.'

"'Will you tell us where the asylum is?'

"'Yes, you are at the door; will you get out of the carriage?'

"We here entered the church, while the woman went in search of Reverend Father Hurley to whom we had brought a letter of introduction."

St. Joseph's Asylum has been peculiarly fortunate in the piety and the executive ability of the women who have acted as its superiors. One name that shines out resplendently is Mother Mary Gonzaga. She was an angel of the battlefield in the Civil War, binding the wounds and soothing the fevered brows of many stricken soldiers. But the work that was closest to her heart was the care and education of orphans. She lived to celebrate her golden jubilee as a Sister of Charity and at the time of her death was reputed to be the oldest member of the order in America and was looked upon by her associates as a saint. Her good deeds live after her, one of her memorials being the Gonzaga Home in Germantown, in the suburbs of Philadelphia.

The time-stained walls of the old building on Spruce Street and the faded pages of the old minute books are reminders of over thirteen decades of unselfishness, self-sacrifice and Christian charity.

LAWRENCE AND THE FRENCH

By JULIE KERNAN

A BOOK greatly in demand in Paris recently is the French translation of "Lady Chatterley's Lover" by D. H. Lawrence. It has been translated by M. Roger-Cornaz from the English unexpurgated edition, and carries a preface by André Malraux, that brilliant young apostle of eroticism. The book has lost nothing of its original breath-catching qualities. As a matter of fact it has gained in this respect, for the plain-speaking of Lady Chatterley's game-keeper, originally written in a Derbyshire dialect with a certain Elizabethan tang, becomes unspeakably gross when expressed in a language renowned for its *clarté*. French critics have taken Lawrence's opus very seriously, treating it as a recognized trend in English letters. Such widely dissimilar spirits as MM. Paul Morand, Edmond Jaloux, Eugène Marsan and Albert Thibaudet got together long enough to hail it as a work full of humanity and emotion. On the other hand, no less a critic than M. Marcel Prévost finds in it nothing but a mass of obscene rubbish from the demented mind of a man who does not even know how to write.

As a result of this discussion bookdealers scarcely have been able to keep the work in stock. The truth is the French are not unpleased to see an oft-expressed criticism of their own literature go home to roost. Waves of reproach for immoral plain-speaking have long reached them from British and American shores. Now they are treated to the extraordinary spectacle of a book more offensive to accepted standards than anything they have ever produced, being translated from the English for their benefit. It is useless to explain that "Lady Chatterley's Lover" was never allowed in America or England in its unexpurgated form, and perhaps this does not matter. It was written in English by a man confronting death, and honestly convinced of the monstrous doctrine which he expounded. His sincerity is unmistakable, and in the French translation his book is apparently having more influence than in the original, since many of the more talented younger French writers were already definitely headed in the same direction. Lawrence, the Anglo-Saxon, has passed a threshold which even the most daring Latin has not dared to cross, and the effect of his book on French writing in the near future will doubtless be considerable.

A very interesting opinion in the matter is expressed by M. François Mauriac in an article entitled "Eros," which appeared April 15 in *Les Nouvelles Littéraires,* a literary weekly which has carried many articles both pro and con on the subject of Lawrence's book. M. Mauriac feels that there is something more to be done than to lament the apparent triumph of erotic literature, that although an experiment is being made which will be paid in coin infinitely dearer than these authors now believe, there are already certain lessons to be drawn by the observer.

He begins his argument by supposing that we have accepted the logic of this generation: if nothing remains to us of the Christian dogma of the fall of man, if the nature of man has not suffered, why should we not speak openly of the things of the flesh? Why do people who have rid themselves of belief of every kind, continue to make a shameful mystery of these subjects? Freud teaches us that the sexual life of a being conceals in great part the secret of his destiny. There seems no reason, therefore, for an author who is an unbeliever, not to follow the road already pointed out by Proust and Gide.

M. Mauriac considers that Lawrence has made use of no tricks in writing his book. He wished to attain the very sum-

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mit of wantonness. Patiently, heavily, with repetitious insistence, he has worked toward his object. He is grave but full of enthusiasm, fervent but exacting. Why all this trouble? It is because Lawrence sees in flesh and blood a formidable power, and thus, against his own will, gives strength to the Christian contention. His book is grave and sad: it is not child's play to do away with the work of centuries or to lay bare the carnal mystery. But what is his object? Having stripped it before us, he makes of it a divinity, and solemnly tells us that he is convinced of its power to renew the face of the earth.

"Just how," M. Mauriac asks, "does he expect to make of this destructive god a factor for the doing of good? He himself was not able to withstand it, and with that which poisoned him, he claims to be able to save the world. In vain does he seek to persuade himself, that it is Christianity alone which has made the flesh sinister and mysterious. Lawrence furnishes us with the most powerful arms against himself, if only by showing us what this thing is, when freed of all religious or social bars. He has drawn us a picture of the blind beast who, in Tacitus and Suetonius, breaks the feeble barrier of philosophies, corrupts and destroys empires, the beast whose wild madness no Orpheus might appease until that twilight or that dawn when an unknown voice resounded over the Mediterranean, 'The great Pan is dead!' "

Despite his effort, Lawrence has been able to give no beauty to the destiny of the two human beings he describes. It is not in the design of nature that man should remain a prey to his desire until the coming of old age: she turns him from it. But rebellious sex mocks nature, dishonors the old and makes them laughable to the world.

"In five years, in ten years," M. Mauriac concludes, "what will Lady Chatterley do about her game-keeper? Will they continue the same gestures to the time of their death? . . . I am thinking of a terrible book, still to be written, 'The Old Age of Lady Chatterley.' "

Autumnal Coast

Under a smoky autumn sun
The upturned rocks lie wet and black;
The earth into the sea goes back,
And acres of water lift and run.

The sea is plowed beneath those hulls
Which split the emerald to white.
The sea is pasture for the light
Laid on bronze wings of floating gulls.

Young spruce and bayberry and fern
Blow sharpness on that dripping gold
Abandoned by the sea—the cold
And salty harvest which will burn

To darkness fringing sand and stone.
And though upon the speaking mouth
Silence shall come and on the south
The final burnished bird be gone

And winter with a frozen cloud
Descend, yet shall the bright weed spill
Along deserted shores and still
Water and rock shall cry aloud.

FRANCES FROST.

COMMUNICATIONS

THE IRISH LAND ANNUITIES

Thompson, N. D.

TO the Editor: In your introduction to Father John A. Ryan's articles on "Irish Land Annuities," you state that Father Ryan "is especially well fitted to embark on such a discussion." It is true that Father Ryan is an economist of international repute. But beneath the swagger of his opening remarks, he admits that he paid only two short visits to Ireland, heard a few of De Valera's speeches, studied a few pamphlets. I suggest that such an acquaintance with the subject is not sufficient to warrant your claim.

I was born in Ireland. I lived there until I was twenty-seven years of age. My father paid exorbitant rents, later considerably reduced and called annuities. My brother still pays these annuities. Perhaps readers of THE COMMONWEAL would like to read my comments on Father Ryan's articles.

The main background, the principal fact, in a discussion of any agreement between Britain and Ireland is that every such agreement is founded, not on justice and free consent, but on force, compulsion and often corruption. This background Father Ryan only once incidentally mentions, and throughout the rest of his articles he entirely overlooks or ignores it. This background is especially important to a discussion of "Irish Land Annuities." The natives were dispossessed by force. The landlords were planted by force. Rent was exacted by force. If a tenant failed to pay his rent, he was evicted by force. The Land Acts were accepted under the ultimate threat of force. The Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 was signed under threat of "immediate and terrible war." Some of this is ancient history but most of it is modern history and exists even to the present day. I am only thirty-four years old, but I saw tenants evicted from their homes at the point of the British bayonet. I lived in Ireland during the Black and Tan reign of terror. I know what British terrorism in Ireland is. Hence I say in every agreement between Britain and Ireland it is not a question of justice and free consent. On the part of Britain, it is a question of how expensive is it to enforce, how convenient is it to settle. On the part of Ireland it is a question of how much can we resist, how expedient is it to submit. In the face of these facts and in contradition to Father Ryan, I say that, whether a private or public debt, the Irish land annuities are most emphatically a tribute.

Father Ryan sees no force in De Valera's argument that the "Government of Ireland Act" of 1920 "assigned the land annuities in both Southern and Northern Ireland to the respective governments which were to be set up in these areas." If, as he says, "ultimately the Irish tenant purchasers are debtors to the holders of the land stock," why did the British government so assign them? Does not the fact that the British government did so assign them prove conclusively that the Irish land annuities are part of the British public debt? Why should she assign private debts? Father Ryan says the Act of 1920 was never accepted. When the treaty was accepted, the act of 1920 was accepted. Furthermore I ask if the Hills-Cosgrave agreement were not a secret document why was it included in a bundle of documents marked private? Why was it not published? Why was it not proclaimed by Cosgrave "a damn good bargain" as was the boundary agreement?

Father Ryan gives his opinion as to the legal case for the retention of the land annuities. Father Ryan is neither an Irish nor a British lawyer, consequently I see no point in his giving his opinion. I modestly refrain from giving mine.

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Father Ryan admits to a great extent the validity of De Valera's moral arguments but I cannot see how the first is a two-edged sword or how it places De Valera in a dilemma. It is one thing to export the annuities to London to swell the British exchequer. It is an altogether different thing to pay the annuities to an Irish government for services mainly agricultural. The important thing at the moment is to retain them, and their disposal can easily be adjusted later.

Father Ryan finds fault with both De Valera and Thomas for their "unreasonable obstinacy." The principle at stake by both men was whether an Irish problem is a domestic affair of the British Empire or whether it is an international affair. It is a principle on which any Irish statesman should be obstinate, and I congratulate De Valera on his obstinacy. The practical reason why De Valera would not accept a dominion chairman, viz., "that the dice would be loaded," deserves more prominence. The Boundary Commission was presided over by a dominion chairman and it is a warning to all Irishmen for all time to beware of dominion chairmen—Edmund Burke's platitude notwithstanding.

Much as I regret it, I must call one of Father Ryan's statements ridiculous. It is the statement that Edmund Burke was a greater Irishman than De Valera. Edmund Burke was born in Ireland, it is true. He was a great British statesman, a great orator in a certain sense. But he belonged to the ascendency class in Ireland. He never did anything practical to redress the wrongs of Ireland. He was a great man, but he certainly was not a great Irishman. On the other hand De Valera, born in New York, of an Irish mother and a Spanish father, reared and educated in Ireland, for many years risked his life for the advancement of the Irish people. He has proved himself a wise and, what is more important, a courageous leader, and history will accord him a place, head and shoulders, above any Irishman yet born.

In his second article Father Ryan expresses alarm at the bitterness of Irish political life. Political opponents over there have called each other "gasbags," "incompetents," "grafters"—that is what "bought" means. I am sure Father Ryan has occasionally heard the word "graft" mentioned in American politics. I recollect that an important United States Senator referred to natives of that huge section of the country of which Father Ryan is an illustrious son, as "sons of wild jackasses." Bitter political epithets are not confined to Irish politics.

Senator Connolly in Senaad Eireann expressed the hope that the Irish people in America and their sympathizers would support the cause of Ireland in her fight for retention of the land annuities, by protesting against cancellation of England's war debts to America. This support is being given and will be given. Father Ryan refers to this as "a piece of crude impertinence, if not of impudence." I wonder how Senator Connolly would characterize Father Ryan's two articles on Irish land annuities.

The rest of Father Ryan's second article is taken up mainly with a glorification of Cosgrave and his associates and with an indictment of De Valera and his associates. If it is wise, always, to submit to superior force, if it is intelligent to comply with unjust demands backed by terrible threats, then surely these men "possess unusual ability and competence," and their achievements—some of which were payment of the land annuities and acceptance of the boundary settlement—"reflect credit" upon them. But if it is wise to stand up to the bully and defy him, if it is intelligent to resist unjust demands, to reject illegal and immoral claims, then they must be convicted of unpardonable weakness and incompetence.

During Cosgrave's régime, the gaols of Ireland were full, coercion was rampant, Britain's commands were abjectly obeyed. Now the gaols are empty, there is peace in the land, the people have settled down to build up an "economically self-sufficient" state.

Well, Cosgrave and Blythe and Mulcahy and McGilligan and Hogan and O'Sullivan are still with the people, and with the people, please God, they will always remain. The leadership of the nation has passed from their hands to De Valera and his associates. They are men who by their courage, their honesty, their intelligence and above all by their perseverence—what Father Ryan calls "obstinacy"—will lead the people of Ireland to a prosperous, independent, united Irish Republic.

REV. JOHN CULLEN.

Westmount, Que.

TO the Editor: Father John A. Ryan's exposition of the thorny question of the "Irish Land Annuities" was simple, logical and factual. To my mind it was the clearest and most impartial viewpoint yet expressed upon that unfortunate political impasse.

Mr. De Valera's case was presented under the heads of four main arguments, two of which were classified as legal and the other two as moral. With those two arguments which Father Ryan discusses at length, this letter is not concerned. The briefs of both sides are sufficiently full to supply the reader with adequate material upon which to form his own conclusions. The remaining arguments, however, those which Father Ryan designates as the first legal and the first moral arguments, to my mind, were disposed of too summarily to do full justice to Mr. De Valera.

The first legal argument concerns itself with the Government of Ireland Act of 1920. Section 26 of that Act provides that the payment of the land annuities shall be paid into the exchequers of the governments of Northern and Southern Ireland. As Father Ryan states, this Act was never ratified in Southern Ireland. But the fact that it proved abortive does not destroy the full force of the argument. There is no doubt that the Constitution of the Irish Free State passed in 1922 repealed the Act of 1920 and thus emptied Mr. De Valera's argument of its legal content, but this did not destroy its validity upon equitable grounds. The Act was duly recorded as a statute passed by the British House of Parliament. As such it at least carries the implication that England at the time saw just reasons for relinquishing her claim to the annuities. Nor would it be totally illogical to maintain that the Act of 1920 as an offer from England was an implicit public acknowledgement of Ireland's right to the annuities. The argument is indirect and of itself is necessarily inconclusive, but it is not that nugatory, as Father Ryan suggests it to be, as to be unworthy of serious consideration. Supplementary arguments have their value.

Father Ryan puts the first moral argument in this succinct fashion: "Since the land was forcibly taken from the people by the British government and the landlords, neither is entitled to compensation." But he goes on to describe it as a "two edged sword." This, I think, is misleading. Such a phrase is generally attributed to an argument which can be used with equal force by either side and hence is of no value. The possibility of a dilemma arising, which Father Ryan foresees and describes as the other edge of the sword, has nothing to do with the validity of Mr. De Valera's argument; nor could it be used in any conceivable fashion as an argument for the English case. The truth which Mr. De Valera wishes to establish is not that

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payment of the annuities should be made to the Irish Free State but, which is an altogether different thing, that on moral grounds payment cannot be exacted by England. These two things must be held as distinct; for if it is proven that England has no right to the moneys, then the extrinsic difficulty of deciding between the claims of the Free State and the persons interested in the land cannot in any way resuscitate England's disproved claim. In other words, for England the other edge of the sword doesn't cut.

If, as Mr. De Valera contends, it can be proven that the land was taken by violence then no plea of uninterrupted peaceful possession on the part of anyone can prescribe the rights of the original owners. For myself I would appraise Mr. De Valera's first moral argument a little higher than one of "a certain ethical appeal and ethical plausibility."

Nor is it on the other hand a complete appreciation of the position of Mr. Thomas, British Secretary of Dominions, to state that his demand for a Commonwealth Arbitration Board "is clearly indefensible." Mr. Thomas defends his stand by an agreement struck at the Imperial Conference of 1930. It was there decided that any differences between the members of the commonwealth, such as are justifiable, should be referred to an ad hoc commonwealth tribunal. Mr. Thomas was only wishing to comply with the recommendations of the conference.

However, I do think that the inexorable stand of the British Cabinet upon this condition is an unwarranted extreme. For the report of this same conference concerning the nature of the commonwealth tribunal goes on to state that "in the absence of general consent to an obligatory system (in the sense that one party be under an obligation to submit thereto if the other part wished it) it was decided to recommend the adoption of a voluntary system." Mr. Thomas had a right to request such a tribunal but in demanding it as a condition sine qua non he has gone beyond his powers.

It is all too clear that someone has to escape from the prison of his own thoughts to lead the way to a solution. Generalizers in the past have been too ready to lay the bold charge of rashness against the whole Irish race, just as they have been wont to sum up in one word the whole of England as stubborn. But the present disastrous situation has helped neither nation to defend its good name.

TIMOTHY P. SLATTERY.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

TO the Editor: Since Dr. Ryan's analysis of the case of the "Irish Land Annuities" is scarcely calculated to instruct those who are not otherwise acquainted with the subject or to impress those who are, his article in THE COMMONWEAL for September 28 is of interest chiefly for the opinion he expresses: "The legal case for the retention of the annuities by the Free State government is so feeble that it would be promptly and completely rejected by any impartial tribunal." And it is natural to set this opinion, which the distinguished professor of moral theology and industrial ethics at the Catholic University of America says he arrived at after two brief visits to Ireland this summer, alongside the opinion delivered by the group of seven prominent members of the Irish bar, including George Gavan Duffy, K. C., James Geoghegan, K.C., and Martin C. Maguire, K.C., who at Mr. De Valera's request examined the "justification" issued by Mr. Cosgrave's Attorney-General. This group made an exhaustive investigation of the entire case set up by the Cosgrave government, found the arguments and reasonings "fallacious and unsound" and decided that "the Irish Free State is entitled to retain the Land Purchase Annuities."

To be sure, Dr. Ryan's opinion is supported by the official statements of the British Ministry as well as by the declarations of various spokesmen for the Cosgrave party, but the reasons advanced by these two participants in the case do not agree with his nor, strangely enough, with one another's. The British rest their case on what they call the "formal and explicit undertaking" signed on February 12, 1923, by Mr. Cosgrave and Mr. Hills, the latter a secretary in the British Treasury Department. Mr. Cosgrave denies that this agreement established the obligation to pay the annuities, and insists that it merely put into working terms an obligation which was implicit in the situation previously existing. His word may be accepted that he signed the agreement while under such an impression, but it is also obvious now that the British secured his signature to the document in order to set up a legal case which they felt was otherwise wanting. Dr. Ryan reconciles the two divergent positions by first accepting Mr. Cosgrave's assertion that the obligation existed before the 1923 agreement was signed (if this claim were tenable it would seem that the British would seize upon it), and secondly by suggesting that the agreement is binding anyway, as its "terms" were ratified by the Irish Parliament. The position of Mr. De Valera's government is that no obligation existed prior to 1923, and that the Cosgrave-Hills agreement could not establish an obligation as it was never ratified by the Irish or the English Parliament. It is an unquestioned fact that the agreement was kept secret in both Ireland and England until April of this year; the qualified "ratification" referred to by Dr. Ryan consisted in the passage by the Free State Parliament, uninformed of the agreement, of legislation recommended by Mr. Cosgrave in fulfilment of what he had promised.

In any event, has not Dr. Ryan approached the legal side of this issue in a rather negative, non-legal manner? He has concerned himself with the case for retention (by Ireland) of the annuities, but is it not the case for their payment (to England) that requires to be perfect? Surely, if the gaps and weaknesses which Dr. Ryan claims to have found in the legal structure actually exist, they favor not the would-be recipient of this money but its present holder. It is a new departure in jurisprudence that a man must pay out money on which he recognizes no legal claim and then take action to recover it. And the colossal effrontery of England was never better exemplified than in the picture she presents today, her hands raised in pious horror, while she calls upon the world to visit due dishonor upon the head of the Free State government because he has acted as any man with common business sense and self-respect would act.

Finally, Dr. Ryan's caustic criticism of Mr. De Valera, for not paying over these annuities to England and then trying to prevail upon her to return them, suggests a question in moral theology—Dr. Ryan's forte, although this point seems to have escaped him:

The chief executive of a nation upon taking office finds that certain disbursements have been made from the national treasury in the past and that their legality is now questioned. He consults the responsible legal authority of the government, and is officially advised that there is no legal ground for the payments. Would he have the moral right to continue the disbursements in the face of this opinion, even if other opinions by interested parties conflicted with it? In the administration of a public trust does not the lack, or even the weakness, of a legal obligation to pay constitute absolutely a legal and moral obligation to retain?

JOHN B. COLLINS.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

When Ladies Meet

A WARM humanity usually pervades every play that Rachel Crothers writes. She can take the most time-worn of themes and give it the luster of fresh life, even to the point of putting cynical critics off their guard and persuading them that what is trite is also true and durably interesting. What she fails to do is to lift the decisions of her characters from individual to universal proportions. That is why, in spite of expert workmanship, persuasive and humorous dialogue, and an underlying seriousness, Miss Crothers's plays have never been great. They have an essential mediocrity which is not the mediocrity of time, place nor environment but of character and principle.

Mr. Atkinson of the *Times* has perhaps summed up the case better than any of the Crothers enthusiasts by saying that "she makes her decisions not by moral precepts but by tests of character. In a higgledy-piggledy world she believes that character (if you can find it out) is still the soundest basis for action." At first view, this looks like a reasonable statement. It is only on second reading that you realize how completely Mr. Atkinson has summarized the essential mediocrity of people who live and breathe and suffer and laugh and act without objective standards and solely in response to unformed and unclarified instincts. Unintentionally, perhaps, he summons before us a whole parade of those people who act on remnants of instincts rather than on positive discovery or test of values. Of course they are human—in the sense that vast numbers of human beings do act on instinct rather than principle. But that is exactly what we mean by mediocrity. People emerge from mediocrity when they cease to be exclusively instinctive animals and apply the effort of intelligence to their lives. Their standards may be thoroughly individual and quite different from the herd. That is not the point at issue. The thing which lifts human action far above the commonplace is the fusion of thought and will and judgment with instinctive impulse. There was once a famous blind pianist who happened also to be an idiot. Audiences marveled at the instinct which guided his hands. But no one thought of him as a great musican. And it is much the same with those persons who never submit themselves to the discipline of seeking standards for their actions. One marvels at the occasional truth of their instincts, but one cannot feel in them anything of greatness. They are more acted upon than active. One feels that what they do has been conditioned by environment, that they are merely reacting, positively or negatively, to ideas of human respect. They are not idealists because they have no formed ideas. At their worst, they are not even malevolent, because they lack the will to evil. At their best, they cannot well be saints, because they have acted from instinctive character and not through that informed will which can triumphantly override instinct. The heroic warrior is the man who overcomes fear, and not the unimaginative vegetable who has never known fear.

All of this may seem a bit wide of the mark in discussing Miss Crothers's latest suave tragi-comedy of two women and a worthless man. "When Ladies Meet" has many exceptional points as a play. There is nothing mediocre to its surface aspects. It has wit, charm, sensitivity and a large fund of deep raw feeling. The mediocrity lies in its essence and not in its trappings. Mary Howard, a novelist, has fallen in love with Rogers Woodruff, her publisher, who is a married man with children. Her instinct warns her against yielding to him. But until a chance circumstance throws her together with his wife—neither woman knowing the other's identity—instinct is on the point of giving way before the age-old excuse that "love like this must be right." But when "the ladies meet," and when Mary Howard, once she discovers who Claire Woodruff really is, can put into concrete human terms what her temptation involves, then the whole affair begins to clarify itself with unhappy certainty. Woodruff shows himself a weakling and a bounder, and both women lose their love for him.

Now there is a great deal of underlying sense in this tale Miss Crothers has devised, a great deal that spikes much of the silly glamor of "other women's husbands" and many of the excuses used to satisfy predatory instincts. But no one in the play has a standard, good or bad, wise or foolish, by which ultimate action is shaped. The weakness of Mary Howard, for example, lies in the fact that she cannot see the wrong in the abstract of something which becomes futile and even repellant the moment it comes down to cases and personalities. A very human failing? Certainly. But likewise a badge of mediocrity. There are very many humble and even illiterate people in the world, very "mediocre" people in the sense of personality or social glamor or education, who still rise far above mediocrity in many of the great decisions of their lives. They use their wills to harness their egos, and they guide their wills by standards they have worked out or accepted. They have ideas which they try to live up to, and that very effort lifts them far above the deadly average of instinct worshipers.

I am not suggesting for an instant that Miss Crothers should have all her characters people of clear purpose and high nobility of action. She is writing of life as it is, of good and evil impulses in struggle, of wisdom and folly and of broken illusions. But if she is ever to lift her characters above a deadly commonplace level, she must endow them with a moral consciousness as well as with instinctive reactions. Great tragedies often spring from the actions of people who betray their own conscious ideals. That is precisely where the catastrophe, the downfall, is heightened. If Mary Howard had been ready to do what she still thought was wrong for the sake of a worthless man, her final awakening and disillusionment would have expanded to far greater proportions. The weakness of the play lies in the fact that, almost to the end, she persuades herself that she must be doing right.

Under Miss Crothers's personal direction and casting, the play is produced with extraordinary excellence. Frieda Inescourt as Mary Howard, and Selena Royle as Claire Woodruff, both give finely modulated performances of unusually sensitive quality. Walter Abel as an unsuccessful suitor achieves an entirely new flexibility and variety of pace and expression. The delightful Spring Byington, as a rattle-brained widow, at whose country house most of the action takes place, makes credible the very inanities which Mary Boland has never made more than comic. Herbert Rawlinson as the insufferable Woodruff carries his unsympathetic part admirably. Miss Crothers's direction brings about a deceptive sense of leisure which covers an effectively swift pace. I venture the thought that the alteration of fifteen key-lines in the play would quite transform its significance without in the least diminishing its value as shrewdly contrived entertainment. (At the Royale Theatre.)

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BOOKS

A Complete Catechism

The Catholic Catechism; drawn up by His Eminence, Peter Cardinal Gasparri; only authorized English translation by Reverend Hugh Pope, O.P. New York: P. J. Kenedy and Sons. $1.60.

EDUCATORS for some time have been acquainted with the "Catechismus Catholicus" of Cardinal Gasparri, which now appears in an English translation. As a matter of fact, the use of the Latin original has become quite general in American seminaries and institutions preparing men for the priesthood. The English translation makes this valuable work available to teachers and students in elementary and high schools.

"The Catholic Catechism," though in the main the work of Cardinal Gasparri, and it would be impossible to find anyone better prepared to accomplish such a difficult task, has been the result of years of study on the part of a Special Commission. The text has also been submitted, before publication, to professors of theology in different parts of the world for their suggestions and corrections. It thus comes to us with an authority that is beyond dispute; its accuracy, as far as dogmatic content is concerned, cannot be questioned.

"The Catholic Catechism" is made up of three parts: a preparatory catechism for children who have not made their First Communion; a larger catechism for older children; and a catechism for advanced pupils. In almost every case the questions and answers are stated in a language easily understood by the children for whom they are intended. Accompanying the text are suggestions for illustrative material which the teacher may use in explaining the full import of the words used to define Catholic dogmas. Particularly valuable is the constant reference to texts of the Sacred Scriptures. The author exhorts teachers to make frequent use of the Bible texts so as to accustom children to hearing the Word of God.

Of particular interest is the Third or Larger Catechism. I say without fear of contradiction that it is the most complete and best catechism ever printed. Not only is the text clear and concise, but what will prove equally valuable to teachers and adults are the appendices—more than half the volume is made up of these appendices—which illustrate, defend and confirm, by quoting decisions of oecumenical councils, encyclicals of Popes, and statements of the Fathers, the doctrines presented in the text. The appendices are a veritable armory of historical and apologetic material, and show most conclusively the catholic character of the doctrines proposed for our belief. A mere glance through this Third Catechism cannot but convince one that the purpose of the author, as expressed in the Introduction, has been achieved. He writes: "Our aim in the compilation of the Third Catechism has been to set down only those doctrines which the Church herself has defined, or which are generally received in the theological schools, or are in accord with general Catholic practices that the Church has never repudiated. We have tried to express these doctrines in as few words as possible, but always with a view to helping clergy and teachers alike, while affording grown-up and educated people an opportunity of getting to know their doctrine thoroughly."

Father Hugh Pope, the distinguished English Dominican, is to be congratulated on the translation which he has made. The English of "The Catholic Catechism" is simple, limpid and strong. I have compared this translation with the Latin original and find that Father Pope has caught, in a striking way, in every case where such comparison has been made, the meaning and value of the original. The author, Cardinal Gasparri, has accomplished many remarkable things in his long life. He has done nothing more remarkable than "The Catholic Catechism," which comes to us as the crowning achievement of a career unparalleled by any churchman since the days of Consalvi.

JAMES H. RYAN.

Changing China

The Tinder Box of Asia, by George E. Sokolsky. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Incorporated. $2.50.

IT IS quite evident that the man who wrote it has lived inside the events he describes so simply. His sketch of the revolution is a sketch of all present revolutionary beginnings—perhaps of most revolutions everywhere in the past, except palace uprisings and the good old transfers of government by force from one group of cousins to another.

His description of the semi-deification of Sun Yat Sen is as compelling as is "The Good Earth." It is exactly what would have to happen, if one knows the simple actors in the drama. It is not so much that "his material is loosely put together" as one reviewer describes it, as that he is describing things that took place with the untheoretical and rather breathlessly chaotic simplicity with which such things actually do take place; as anybody knows who has lived through the inside of revolutions. Those things are only made truly complicated by gentlemen trying to describe current events without living them.

A description in the book which interests this reader particularly is the rôle in the revolution, not of Christianity, but of followers of various Christian sects. It raises speculation as to the truly best missionary methods. Thirty years ago, the average "native" divided Christianity into "Catholics" and "Christians." The former were mainly under the French missions who were concerned only with the religion of their people, not with their politics or with their Westernization. The latter were mainly adherents of the American missions, and it often seemed to the detached observer that acquisition of short cuts to Westernization, not religion, was their object.

Into this subject, which the author handles very well, comes the present very lively question of American influence on the new Gospel of China: Sun Yat Sen's Three Principles, compulsory study today in Chinese schools, which he does not treat so adequately. America, through the scholarly energy of several students, is becoming aware of the importance of the discovery that Dr. Maurice William's book, "The Social Interpretation of History," had a far-reaching effect on Sun Yat Sen in his last days. It seems to be reasonably certain that it was Mr. William's refutation of Marxianism which influenced Sun to reverse himself also. That has its importance, though certain Christian groups have failed to see it and even deny it. The point is that Sun Yat Sen is obligatory teaching in Chinese schools—not Christianity. Either Christian schools must find therein nothing incompatible with Christian doctrine or close their schools. It is folly for Christian teachers not to see that. It is unfortunate that Sokolsky did not go into it deeper than a mere allusion. It is of enormous importance that Sun's sacred message can be concorded with Christian teaching and Western democratic ideals.

With Sokolsky's main thesis that world peace is vitally concerned with Sino-Japanese friendship, this reviewer is as firmly in accord as he is convinced that American positive diplomacy should be directed to that end. It is the first book this reviewer has read which gives him a lifelike picture of current China.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

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Beautiful Italy

Hill Towns and Cities of Northern Italy; text by Dorothy Noyes Arms; illustrated by John Taylor Arms. New York: The Macmillan Company. $25.00.

IN THE days of sumptuous family magazines, the reader was beguiled nearly every month with accounts of journeys to far places into which more or less appropriate reproductions of wash drawings and other sketches were dovetailed. Those times are seemingly gone forever. Today something far more effective, but unfortunately also far more expensive, must take the place of what was once the stock-in-trade of men like Pyle and Wyeth. The present volume by the Armses is a sequel to their "Churches of France." It has a somewhat more novel subject-matter (though enough has been written about northern Italy), and in my opinion represents an advance, good though the earlier book was.

Mrs. Arms's text is beguiling and, one thinks, always human. She makes no effort to dignify her tour into more than it really was, but scarce a page lacks some interesting detail seized upon by an avid and cultivated imagination. The section on Venice is no doubt the best. Indeed, as one whom that ancient city has always fascinated and who has therefore read much about it, the present reviewer would like to say that Mrs. Arms has seen Venice with eyes quite her own—an achievement after these many decades of English and American travelers. She has a quite disarming concern with people, and does not merely sandwich them in between architectural marvels.

The fifty-six reproductions of etchings, aquatints and drawings constitute a luxury which we hope at least a few people will permit themselves to own. Though the printing is uniformly good (save for inconsequential mishaps here and there), the etchings have lent themselves particularly well to the press, and have a clarity and delicacy of outline which almost compensates for the absence of genuine proofs. Mr. Arms is often a truly surprising and meticulous draughtsman. Compare, for example, the Venice balcony with others; and it will be seen that he combines a very keen, almost photographic fidelity to the object with a rare grace and poetry of composition. Such an art may doubtless be termed quite severely anti-impressionist, though occasionally one is of a different mind. Thus the drawing of the towns of Colle de Val D'Elsa suggests Slevogt, which the aquatints of Como have almost a late romantic quality. What matters after all is that one has been given a chance to see the work of an exceptionally competent artist in a form which, though not compensating for the loss of the originals, is none the less appealing and decorous. This is a sketch-book, though a carefully finished one, of as charming a region as earth affords.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

Ruin of an Aristocracy

The Glory of the Habsburgs, by Princess Fugger. New York: The Dial Press. $5.00.

THIS is a book from which I had expected a good deal, but in which I was disappointed. Not that it does not contain interesting material, because it does, but curiously this does not prevent it from being deadly dull. It is impossible to read it at a stretch; it needs to be digested.

For one thing, the book is written from an utterly exclusive point of view, a point of view which few in our country will be able to understand or to sympathize with. And after reading it, one begins to wonder whether the author really thinks that there exist other people in the world outside her own class and her own set. The descriptions are certainly interesting at times, but

This is one of those unusual and lovely lamps for which Altman is noted. The base is an exquisite specimen of carved carnelian. It has just been imported with others of jade, rose quartz, amethyst, agate and green crystal, ranging in price from $155 to $1250. Several antique Chinese porcelain lamps of the Ch'ien Lung period, 1736 to 1795, have been received, also. They are $135 to $600. All these lamps are appropriately mounted and with shades made especially to harmonize with each piece.

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NEXT WEEK

CAN WE GO BACK TO THE LAND? by Charles Morrow Wilson is a delightfully flavorous article by a man who knows the land and who believes that with some exceptions due to a bad combination of circumstances or weak character, many people will find a richness and fullness of life in living on the land as a direct result of the present economic disturbance. . . . THE RETURN OF BERGSON, by Pierre Linn, is an analysis of one of the most important works of contemporary philosophy, Bergson's "The Two Sources of Morals and Religion." The writer gives an excellent indication of the import of this book, which will be widely discussed, and briefly criticizes its orientation. . . . WON THROUGH, by C. C. Martindale, the distinguished English Jesuit and author, speaks kindly of THE COMMONWEAL by particularizing what he believes to be its contribution to the common good and points to the narrow path between being "cloyingly complacent" and "blatantly denunciatory," oh pleasant but precarious path through the wild woods! . . . CHANGES IN NATIONAL OUTLOOK, by Boyd-Carpenter, suggests the tremendous increase of consideration being devoted to international politics, both in and out of academic circles, proposes some of the likeliest trends in academic consideration of the subject and the possible beneficial results. . . . POLITICS, by Charles Willis Thompson, which we had scheduled for this issue, has been held over to next week when the current fierce contest will be waxing heatedly to its close and the crashing of epithets will be heard at its loudest through the land.

a greyish atmosphere pervades throughout, the phraseology is heavy, and there is not the slightest sense of humor to be detected in its three hundred odd pages.

Looked upon from this particular angle, the memoirs of the Princess Fugger are absolutely characteristic of the mentality of the Austrian aristocracy of which she was and is a member, a mentality weak, selfish and self-centered. They were solemn people, these Austrian aristocrats, ignorant, sometimes loud, although always distinguished in their manners and language, charming at times, but without humor. They believed in themselves, in their order, in their country.

Still this book deserves to be read, provided one has a considerable amount of patience. There are some details in it which were not known before, such, for instance, as those concerning the actress, Katherine Schratt, who played such an important part in the existence of the old Emperor Francis-Joseph, and who, the Princess Fugger assures us, was never anything else to him but a friend, an assertion the naïveté of which makes one smile. The author's account of the suicide of the Crown Prince Rudolph is also new, but in some parts not convincing, especially when she says that the Baroness Vetsera was not cognizant of her daughter's relations with the Archduke, and that certainly she had not furthered them. This is so contrary to accepted facts that to give it credence strong proofs of it would have to be adduced.

The book ends with the death of the Emperor Francis-Joseph. This is just as well, for the Princess Fugger would have found it difficult to describe events following the fall of the Habsburg dynasty, and the disintegration of all that she had been brought up to believe would outlast her. Hers is the sad fate of one left alone amidst the ruins of all she held dear. As she says herself, the curtain had been rung down for her, shutting out forever the splendor and beauty of former days.

CATHERINE RADZIWILL.

Geology

Earth History, by Luther A. Snyder. New York: The Century Company. $4.50.

THIS is essentially a textbook written for the general reader who wishes to gain a knowledge of earth science without taking an organized course, as well as for an introductory college course in geology. It is in no sense a popularization that can be read through at one sitting. The reader must give it thought and attention, else he had better leave the book alone. It will well repay his attention, however, since the author writes clearly and forcefully and his experience has taught him what points require particular emphasis for the beginner. Important features are the definiteness with which fact is separated from theory and conjecture, and the inclusion of several chapters that summarize and discuss the current explanations of the origin of the earth, mountain building, and climatic changes during the course of earth history.

The emphasis of the book is upon the historical side of geology. This is as it should be, since the subject is essentially historical. But the compression of the whole of physical geology into one chapter of forty pages, while admirably suited to the purpose of the general reader, is a weak point for a college text.

The chapters, "Keys to Earth History," "The Earth Time Scale" and "Borderlands, Basins and Troughs," are well done and are extremely important in preparing the way to explain the development of the earth.

The historical part of the book is divided into two portions. One traces the development of the earth's surface through a

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series of cycles superposed upon the commonly accepted time scale. This part commences with the Paleozoic Era and, after leading up to the present, returns to touch upon the less well-known pre-Cambrian times. The second part treats the development of life through all its different types leading up to man. The author pictures and describes many living representatives of the various classes as well as the fossil forms. In this way he obtains a continuity with the present that is rarely attained. The part dealing with man emphasizes the knowledge gained from early man's cultures to a greater degree than that derived from the scant and fragmental fossils.

This separation of the organic from the inorganic part of earth history is probably advisable for the sake of clarity, but the reader must remember that in reality the two are closely interdependent.

The names of other chapters, such as "Man and Minerals," "The Meaning of Scenery," "Present and Future," indicate their content and interest.

The profuse illustrations are new and well chosen. Altogether it is the best book which the reviewer knows for a serious layman wishing to acquaint himself with the findings of geology.

WILLIAM M. AGAR.

The Marxian Literary Critique

The Liberation of American Literature, by V. F. Calverton. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.75.

MR. V. F. CALVERTON possesses two virtues which are rare indeed among American writers of the so-called Left Wing—good temper and scholarship. He is a Marxian, but one who states rather than vociferates. If he would content himself with being a literary critic, without insisting that his particular sociological and political beliefs must be the final touchstone of merit, his influence would be far greater than it is, for besides his equable temper and his scholarship he has taste and a keen intelligence. But, alas, his Communism, like King Charles's head, is always popping up. To be fair to him, in "The Liberation of American Literature" it pops less obviously until the last two chapters, and dominates only the last.

The main portion of the book is taken up with an interesting and scholarly discussion of American writers from the early colonial period on, and though his economic thesis is apparent in his disregard of spiritual values, he says many keen things which needed saying. His division of the Puritans into those of the upper and lower bourgeoisie, though one might wish he would use the more native term, upper and lower middle class, and his effort to show that early and middle American literature was dominated by the latter group, even after it had in the Frontier School thrown off the colonial complex, is ably brought out.

That it tells the whole story is a different matter—there was an aristocratic influence even in early New England—and Mr. Calverton's insistence that literature must be evaluated sociologically rather than aesthetically puts literature into a Procrustian bed, into which more than one of our finest writers simply refuse to fit, despite Mr. Calverton's most strenuous pullings and pushings. When they do not, he simply belittles them as he does with Poe and Melville, or ignores them as he does with some of the later talents such as Emily Dickinson, Eleanor Wylie or Edna Millay.

The trouble with Mr. Calverton is of course that he has become infatuated with an idea utterly foreign to the American genius and believes that it can be superimposed upon us by the mere force of economic demand. Whether there is any such

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demand at all is very doubtful, but that economics alone can create the genius of a people is unthinkable to all but a fanatic fringe. Much as Mr. Calverton and his fellow Marxians may dislike individualism, the individual and his salvation both earthly and spiritual is what always has counted and always will. We are John Smiths and not just John Smith. The logical result of Mr. Calverton's creed would make us a nation of Robots, a nation of human Ford cars, probably of the Model T variety.

And in pressing his point Mr. Calverton descends to the absurd, as in his final chapter where he sets up the writers of the *New Masses* as the hope of the future. It is admirable that he refuses to grovel with the defeatists, that he sees clearly the futility and sterility of Dreiser and Jeffers, but that John Dos Passos and Michael Gold have the seeds of eternal life is preposterous.

When Mr. Calverton ceases to genuflect before the brass idol of what he terms "proletarian ideology" he will take the place his talent deserves.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Some Modern Educators

Remakers of Mankind, by Carleton Washburne. New York: John Day Company. $5.00.

"REMAKERS of mankind" is a strong term. Saint Paul, Mohammed and Columbus probably deserve the name. But to apply this title to a coterie of schoolmen such as Goodwin B. Watson of Columbia, Horn of Iowa, Hutchins of Chicago, betrays a lack of perspective. Says Mr. Washburne: "Mankind . . . begins to seek in education a means for developing character commensurate with its power and for determining the general direction of human evolution." That mankind will ever have such an instrument of power in the schools Mr. Washburne describes seems extremely doubtful. On the contrary, there is much truth in the quoted statement of an unnamed Japanese teacher: "I don't believe education has anything to do with social progress. We may fool ourselves into thinking that we can influence human destiny, but the currents of life, economic and social forces quite outside the educational realm determine human evolution—not the schools!"

In reality, "education" is much broader than Mr. Washburne's narrow use of the term as meaning "schooling." It embraces all the influences—newspapers, magazines, companions, machines, churches, trade unions, lodges, etc.—playing upon the individual and developing him in one direction or another. In this sense, Henry Ford has been an important educator. Probably he comes closer than any of Mr. Washburne's interviewees to being a "remaker of mankind."

But even as a survey of schools, and of one kind of schools, Mr. Washburne's book is not a good example. It cannot compare, for instance, with Flexner's study of universities. "Remakers of Mankind" was produced according to the threadbare formula: prepare a questionary, get replies verbal or written from a number of persons, string the replies together with an introduction, a running commentary and a summary.

When the survey is written up in a little over three hundred pages—including such irrelevances as drinking Lady Nunn's tea—and covers Japan, China, India, the Arab nations, Turkey, Russia, Poland, Germany, France and the United States, it is evident that the results must be spread very thin. And there are reasons to doubt the accuracy of the report. For instance, twenty-eight pages are given to "France—Education Freed from Nationalism." Mr. Washburne begins with a quotation from

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Professor Hayes and attempts to demolish the thesis that the French schools are nationalistic. Certainly he carries much less conviction than does Hayes. Again, one of Mr. Washburne's questions was whether a citizen's conscience should be always subordinated to the demands of his state. "It was interesting," he comments "that Dr. Becker although a . . . Roman Catholic, maintained the right of the individual to personal revolt against the state's demands." Why "although"? The Catholic Church has always taught her children to "obey God rather than man." And as a social, educative force this Church is immensely more important than many of the schools to which Mr. Washburne devotes space. A practically complete ignoring of the Catholic Church leaves a wide gap in the survey and throws considerable doubt on Mr. Washburne's judgment as to "remakers of mankind."

J. Elliot Ross.

Ireland's National University

The National University Handbook. Dublin: National University of Ireland.

With Michaelmas term—October to December, 1932—the National University of Ireland enters on the twenty-fifth year of its legal existence. Because of the approach of that first jubilee and of the significance attached to 1932 in connection with the holding of the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin, the senate of the university provided for the timely issue of this handbook which deals with the entire range of the academic activities of the university. The name "Handbook" would seem a misnomer in our American usage, for the volume has nearly three hundred pages of large octavo and is beautifully illustrated.

All those who are interested in the future of Ireland will surely be very much interested in this volume, for it portrays all the various educational interests which are being cultivated, and which are at last securing for the Irish the opportunities for education which have been so meager in the past but which the Irish have been so intent on securing that they have been ready to make all sorts of sacrifices. This volume makes it perfectly clear that the Irish of the present day are missing no phase of education that can be secured.

Those who are interested in university education in Ireland will find an abundance of information here gathered not easy to obtain elsewhere. The "Handbook" gives accounts of the foundation of the university, of the various university colleges, Dublin, Cork, Galway, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, besides the academic statistics and the academic publications both in letters and the sciences, as well as the story of the relationship between the National University and the Irish schools. There is a picture gallery of all those who in the past twenty-five years have been prominently connected with the university, portraits of the late Archbishop Walsh, the first chancellor of the university, of Sir Bertram C. A. Windle, the first president of University College, Cork, as well as a number of other prominent officials in the institution.

Irish-American readers will be interested in pictures of the agricultural school buildings connected with the various colleges, which indicate clearly that the Irish are settling down to realize that their farming means more than anything else to them and on it is going to depend to a very great extent the future of the Irish people.

The book is a beautiful example of book-making and it is entirely a native product.

James J. Walsh.

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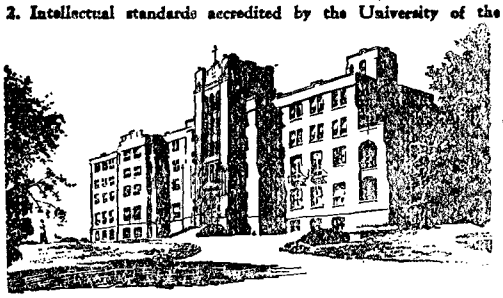
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Briefer Mention

Selected Poems, by L. A. G. Strong. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.00.

WITH characteristic sense, Mr. Strong announces that his reason for issuing a modified "collected poems" is the likelihood of being forgotten as a versifier just as he has established a reputation as a novelist. But his work has so much individuality and skill that one surmises his poems will figure in all the anthologies representative of the present period. The shorter lyrics frequently show an almost grim hardness of thought and phrase, together with a wit aimed shrewdly and confidently. I feel, however, that it as a narrative poet that Mr. Strong is particularly memorable. "Talk at the Inn" has what few stories in verse possess—gripping composition which so interests the reader in what is happening that he is only later permitted to appreciate the artistry with which the poet has suited all to his purpose. On the whole, this is an exceptional book which nobody will regret purchasing.

The Three Roses, by Vincent Blasco Ibañez. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $2.50.

PERHAPS Señor Ibañez has read Willa Cather's "Shadows on the Rock" and determined to do for Valencia what she did for Quebec. Valencia suffers by the comparison. Indeed its local color has been employed so thickly that the real city has been lost. In consequence, the author has contrived a luring volume of tourist's bait but has forgotten he set out to write a novel. There is a plot, but it is purely incidental, and there are characters edged into the picture with such violent strokes that all of them become merely unreal spectators or participators in fiestas, bull fights, dances, banquets and other jubilations of a city suddenly gone wild with display.

Twenty-four Vagabond Tales, by John Gibbons. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $2.00.

WHEN John Gibbons travels he avoids the well-beaten tourist trails and delights in those places and people which retain an unspoiled personality. His tales are, in consequence, vastly different from the usual output of travelers' logs, and they have a distinct Catholic appeal since many of them are concerned with churches, priests, saints and the adventures of hearing Mass in out-of-the-way corners of Europe. Mr. Gibbons is clever in the turns he gives his story, but his style could be equally brisk and popular without falling into the schoolboyish awkwardness which characterizes the writing in this book.

CONTRIBUTORS

FRANK C. HANIGHEN contributes articles to current periodicals and makes translations from the French.

GEORGE HOLLADAY MCKEE is professor of history in Georgia School of Technology.

JOHN F. O'HAGAN was associated with Mr. Edison at Menlo Park.

FRANK A. SMOTHERS is on the staff of the Chicago *Daily News*.

SISTER M. MADELEVA, C.S.C., is the author of "Knights-Errant" and "Penelope, and Other Poems."

GEORGE BARTON of the editorial staff of the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, is the author of "Angels of the Battlefield," "Little Journeys around Philadelphia" and "Famous Detective Stories."

JULIE KERNAN is secretary of the French Book Club.

FRANCES FROST is an American poet.

RT. REV. JAMES H. RYAN is rector of the Catholic University of America and the author of "An Introduction to Philosophy."

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS, formerly in the American diplomatic service, is the author of "Undiplomatic Memories."

PRINCESS CATHERINE RADZIWILL of Russia is an author and lecturer, whose latest book is "It Really Happened," an autobiography.

WILLIAM M. AGAR is professor of geology in Columbia University.

GRENVILLE VERNON, author of "The Image in the Path," is a publisher and a critic of literature and music.

REV. J. ELLIOT ROSS is the author of "Christian Ethics."

JAMES J. WALSH, M.D., writer and lecturer, is the author of "The Thirteenth, the Greatest of Centuries" and other books.

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